

L E T T E R S

ON THE

MANNERS OF THE FRENCH,

AND ON THE

FOLLIES AND EXTRAVAGANCIES

OF THE

T I M E S.

WRITTEN BY AN INDIAN AT PARIS.

Nam et gentibus proprii mores sunt : nec idem in Bar-
baro, Romano, Græco, probabile est. QUINT.

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INTRODUCTION



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INTRODUCTION.

THE present letters were written on the eve of the late revolution in France: they are not, however, confined to political subjects. Their object is confessedly to paint the manners of the Parisians, and the picture appears to be a likeness, if a likeness can really be taken of a capricious and volatile people, whose leading features are changing every moment! At the time these letters were composed, Louis XVI. was a king; at present he is no more than a citizen; a few glasses of *Eau de vie*, operating on the intellects of the Parisian fish-women, may, one day, make him a king again. The abolition of titles is another event that

had not taken place when our Indian closed his correspondence. To-day a *French lord* is something less than a man; a few months hence he will probably be exalted, by his whimsical countrymen, to the rank of an angel.

Nil potest esse diuturnum cui non subest ratio.

The French publication has been read with much avidity at Paris, and contains an antecedent volume, which, after some deliberation, the translator has omitted, because, as it is principally filled with the Indian's reflections during his voyage, and before his arrival at Paris, it is consequently less interesting, and less conformable to the title of the work than the subsequent letters.

CHARLES SHILLITO.

Colchester,

July 26, 1790.



L E T T E R S

ON THE

MANNERS OF THE FRENCH.

MARY CHEEVERS
L E T T E R I.

ZATOR TO GLAZIR.

I SHALL begin this letter with a description of the *Palais Royal*, in order to give thee some idea of French elegance. It is a kind of garden, preceded by a handsome palace, and surrounded with a considerable number of shops, where riches and industry offer to the eyes of the curious, Parisian *fineries*, in their newest and most captivating forms.

The area is an oblong square, planted on each side with three rows of trees, which are called Indian chesnut trees, al-

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though

though such things were never seen in this country. But here, in order to make things more valuable, they give to trees as well as to stuffs, to fashions as well as to ragouts, outlandish names, which have no etymology, but in the fertile inventions of the Parisians.

Through arches, prettily sculptured, these shops form a most charming effect, especially in the moment when the lamps are lighted. An edifice, which seems to be the work of fairies, so delicately is it constructed, occupies the middle. It is feared that, ere long, the dampness will occasion the destruction of this building: which gives great uneasiness to the loungers, who cannot imagine in what manner they shall console themselves for its loss. It would have produced another *coup d'œil* in a place more spacious: for here it affects the prospect of the garden, insomuch that both the one and the other are but imperfectly seen. Shrubs and flowers would have appeared with more propriety in this place: but art would not



not have been displayed in a cryſtalline arch, in ſculpture extremely curious, and in a circumfluence of water-works, that diſſuſe a delicious coolneſs.

The ſituation of the garden renders it commodious for aſſignations. Momus has here his buffoons, Plutus his worſhippers, and Venus her victims. Virtue alone appears only by chance; yet ſtill ſhe appears, becauſe nobody, without much ſelf-denial, can keep away.

Here are found the moſt ſplendid coffee-houſes, where the intereſts of all nations are freely diſcuſſed. When we were at war with the Engliſh, we Indians were drawn into ſuch diſcuſſions as well as our neighbours.

The *Reſtaurateurs* are other places of rendezvous, whither people run in crowds at the hour of dinner. The purſe is here emptied before the ſtomach is filled: and what is more ſingular, people who have the greateſt appetites and the leaſt money, generally frequent theſe places. But our young men *of faſhion* imagine they make

themselves conspicuous by affecting to appear at them.

Nothing can be more agreeable than the ease with which people breakfast in this brilliant garden. While they are taking their refreshments, they have the pleasure of seeing all ages and all nations pass in review. The friend here finds his friend, and the banker his correspondent; even the *abbé* walks with his mistress,—in short, every thing appears singular and pleasant.

There is not a quarter in Paris that does not look upon the *Palais Royal* with regret. It attracts all strangers: nobody lodges but in its vicinity, nothing is bought, but within its splendid circle. It is wished, and indeed with much reason, that the three theatres, at least, which are here situated, were dispersed through the capital. Any body may live in this place, in the most comfortable manner, without ever leaving it.—Agreeable lodgings, elegant dresses, fine ragoûts, new books, recent news, numerous societies,

cieties,—every thing is in the most engaging form.

What exclamations would be made by our wives, were they to come to this seducing place, especially with that unbounded liberty which the fair-sex enjoys at Paris! There would be none among them, but those who love their husbands to distraction,—for, with us this sort of love is in fashion,—and who would be fearful of infidelities. They would finish, however, by paying their husbands with their own coin, and Indian manners would soon degenerate into the manners of France. Heaven preserve me from harbouring such a wish: a wish that my heart abhors,* and which is interdicted by the laws of our divine prophet!—
Adieu.

L E T.

LETTER II.

TO GLAZIR,

IT is not without surprise that I see the grand sabbath of the christians, called Sunday, profaned by every irregularity. It is no more regarded than any other day of the week, nor does it occasion any interruption of public business. People buy, and sell, and build houses, and traffic in the stocks; and he who most notoriously transgresses the laws, thinks himself superior to the rest of mankind. It is not thus with us, my dear Glazir: the ordinances of the legislature are faithfully observed: and what glory could possibly result from the sporting with that worship which a weak mortal owes to the Supreme Being? If we are subject
to

to the elements which the eternal has created, how cheerfully ought we to acknowledge his dominion! He raised us from nothing, and made us the noblest work of his hands: yet still we bear about us the stamp of mortality, not being able to vie with the omniscient.

The immense height of the heavens, the depth of the seas, which cannot be founded, oblige us to confess the omnipotence of that being who made us: and if we do not trifle, even with man, who is bounded by the progress of rivers, and the steepness of rocks, how dare we insult that reason which humbles itself before the author of nature, and acknowledges his infinite perfections?

God is entire: possessing nothing in common with the universe, but the glory of having created it: not in order to abandon it to second causes. but for the purpose of becoming himself the life and soul of it, being disengaged from terrestrial or corporeal substance. His attributes are indivisible, like himself, because
he

he possesses only his own inherent qualities. The child that is born without the appearance of reason, is as near to his perfections as the wisest philosopher.

To lift a corner of nature's veil is enough to discover that she is the work of his hands: but this same nature has appeared so perfect to those who judged merely from their senses, that they have taken her for God himself. Their opinion was so much the more absurd, as they gave to her the same perfections which they refused to the god-head, under the pretence that they were not able to comprehend it:—an error which teaches us that mankind abandon themselves to disputes at which common sense shudders: and that we cannot, without giving up our natural understanding, be ignorant that the universe was created by an absolute power, that preserves, and gives it motion.

These questions, too important to be discussed in a letter, have excited the attention of many learned doctors, whose
gravity

gravity has afforded me much amusement. They seem to be well informed, but the precepts of the college have invested them with qualities too abstruse and pedantic.

LETTER III.

TO PALMYRA.

IF my residence at Paris should continue to beautify my soul and my senses, as it hath hitherto done, I fear that the *Seine* will possess in my mind the place which is now occupied by the *Ganges*: and that it will appear, in my eyes, like that sacred river. Upon its banks I see the most charming things, and listen to the most interesting of mankind, who make even the abstruse sciences the objects of their amusement.

I swear,

I swear, then, by the *Seine* which, if I had the command of nature, should change places with the *Indus*;—I swear that she possesses a certain *undescribable something* by which the most indifferent philosopher is agreeably smitten, and which, in embellishing the understanding, seems to dilate and enlarge the soul.

I dined, the other day, in a delightful villa, situated on the banks of this same *Seine*, and surrounded by all that is most picturesque of art and nature: when I thus addressed myself to this charming river: O thou dearest of waters, do not, I conjure thee, do not confine thy current to this enchanting spot. Flow on, even to the Indies, and carry the tribute of my heart to her whom I adore. Thou wilt find her in the midst of her children, instilling into their tender minds the lessons of morality, and talking to them of their father.

Thou findest, Palmyra, how I am afflicted by my imagination, which creates illusions, that console me for thy absence.

Yesterday,

Yesterday, while I observed the rays of the sun caressing the meats that were served upon my table, I exclaimed: Divine luminary that enlightenest the Indies, and lovest the greater part of thy warmth when thou visitest these regions, return towards her whom my soul loveth, and express to her the ardour of my sentiments. Thou wilt be infinitely more dear to her when thou hast performed this message.

Thou wouldest be surpris'd to see in what manner they educate their children in this country. During infancy, when the best measures ought to be employed to make them robust, they are enervated for want of sleep. Their repose is often delayed till midnight, although the sleep of the evening is most necessary to them. They are besides overburdened with food, instead of a light dinner being given them, and their supper entirely retrenched.

With respect to morals, scarce have they the use of their reason before their attention is directed to toys and bawbles.

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The first words they are taught to pronounce are the most frivolous of the language: by which means the far greater number of children, educated at Paris, have less energy than they might otherwise possess.

Prosperity to the Indians, who in their sixth year are nearly the same as in their twentieth! Our severe education qualifies them for the profound sciences, and makes them capable of signalizing themselves in battle. Embrace our dear children, and, with thy vivifying breath, diffuse through their souls the first fruits of courage and of virtue. May they, one day, be worthy of serving their country, and zealous for the religion of their fathers.—Adieu.

L. E. T.

LETTER IV.

TO GLAIZIR.

I HAVE just left the principal church, which is called a cathedral, because it is the episcopal see of a bishop. I have assisted in the divine service of the christians, which is performed with the utmost pomp. One is almost persuaded that heaven descends upon earth, and opens to receive their voices. Their sighs, their genuflections, and harmonious strains, created such emotions in my mind that, for the moment, I was a catholic.

I will own to thee that I should not chuse to be a frequent spectator of such ceremonies. I should tremble lest the religion of our holy prophet should be erased from my heart. Were travellers to
judge

judge of religion only by its exterior, there is not one, I swear by heaven, that would not embrace catholicism. The protestants have no such magnificence or dignity in their temples.

The archimandritus, who is called an archbishop, was invested with glittering ornaments, which might be said to be matched with the splendour of his virtues.

Our ambassadors have assisted at a similar ceremony, of which they will assuredly preserve the remembrance, as of a solemnity which imposes upon the senses, and holds them in veneration. Notwithstanding the submission I owe to our own customs, I tell thee confidently that every religion stands in need of the assistance of exterior worship. During the course of this life, men are powerfully governed by their senses; nor can they so effectually disengage themselves from the dominion of them, as to discover only one God, who is a pure spirit.

I formerly gave thee my opinion respecting



pecting the theologists, whom I found too sophistical to be my guides. One among them told me, with much frankness, that a jargon had been introduced into the schools, which rendered almost every question problematical. Instead of persuading by irrefragible authorities, they lead us from one distinction to another, till we lose the thread of those truths in which they pretend to instruct us. I dictate, said he, the loose sheets of the young candidates who are my Scholars : and if what is foreign to the questions that are discussed be cut off from them, very little will remain. But we argue upon things of which we are entirely ignorant, and too often oppose our understanding to that of God himself. It is this that gives to theology the turn of enigmas. He added that commentators had more perplexed matters than elucidated them : and that the gospel was sufficiently clear of itself, nor needed the explications of interpreters.

This avidity of mortals, to know the
secrets

secrets of God, proves that men are born for some important end.

Thou tellest me nothing with regard to *Astabek*. Is he at China, whither he promised to go? But what can he do in that immense region, whence an incommunicative fullness banishes all strangers?

Farewel! Be always thyself: for to be better is impossible.

LETTER V.

TO GLAZIR.

THE dead are buried here in a singular manner. Although the deceased neither hears nor sees, his funeral is accompanied with the thundering of bells, and all the flambeaux that can be collected.

lected. I speak of the interment of the rich, for the poor can hardly find a corner of the earth, in which to lay their bones.

The folly of priests, and the vanity of friends, have rendered these obsequies mere objects of curiosity. People flock to them in crouds, and consider them as amusing spectacles. It is thus that we see generations passing away without thinking that we are, ourselves, subject to the same vicissitudes. The dead are not here interred till twenty-four hours after their decease ; but, no sooner is that time expired than they are rolled up, and suffocated, as it were, in in woollen cloths, Ordinances are more easily eluded in Paris than in any other city in the world, because they are more habitual !

If thy soul be always at my ear, as thou hast assured me it is, thou often hearest my heart beat as an echo to our friendship.

L. E. T.

LETTER VI.

TO GLAZIR.

CHINESE gardens, which are here called English, are flagrant proofs of the extravagancy of the times. Hills and mountains are overturned, to make way for petty bridges, petty alleys, petty meadows, and petty rivers. These are excellent gardens for a misanthropist who loves to walk alone, but equally insipid and incommodious for a sociable mortal, who had much rather traverse his domains in good company.

Ruins, likewise, present themselves too frequently to our view. Time alone will effect their increase, without our anticipating his rigours. The decays of art and nature were never pleasing spectacles
to

to a thinking being. We admire indeed the remains of a noble edifice which has been reduced to disorder by the warring elements, and a succession of years ; but we regard as despicable puerilities, those artificial ruins which boast no higher antiquity than that of a month, or a day.

“ What a charming place, said a little miss, to her mamma, when she first beheld an English garden,——it will make an excellent promenade for my little lap-dog.”

I should be obliged to renounce the pleasure of having thee by my side if our gardens were like the gardens of the English. But to have seen them is enough to disgust a reasonable man. High walls and houses are overturned, and ruins substituted in their places ; and even these ridiculous buildings are clothed in the garb of antiquity :—a striking contrast in the manners of the French, who in every thing they undertake, affect an air of gaiety and novelty !

In Paris, more particularly, follies of this kind are so frequent that I could write volumes upon the subject. Characteristic levity produces this effect. They employ a physician whom they know to be ignorant of his profession : they discard a minister while they are loading him with honours . they profess a religion which they ridicule in broad day-light : they undo, at night, what they have done in the morning : they laugh at the singularities of the English, yet they adopt those very singularities !

L E T.

LETTER VII.

TO GLAZIR.

THE more conscientiously things are sold in Paris, the dearer they are bought. Conscience is a word that assists fraud and knavery, but brings bigotry into disgrace. I was twice taken by surprise in this ambuscade, and should have been duped a third time, had I not been warned by my friends of the impending danger. A cause of the *conscientious* kind was lately tried in the courts. A young man, upon the point of marriage, bought goods to the amount of twenty thousand francs, of a merchant who had the credit of being the most religious man living. After

After having struck the bargain, he caused the merchandise to be estimated, thinking he had made an excellent bargain. The whole, however, was valued at seven thousand francs. Two or three uninterested persons confirmed the valuation, and the merchant lost his trial, because he sold too *conscientiously*.

This affair, without doubt, was well judged but the case is not always so, as I have, by mere accident, been informed. I was seated at the *Palais Royal*, when an agreeable rencounter brought me acquainted with an interesting woman. She told me that she had lately arrived from a distant part of the kingdom, to solicit the judges to be favourable to her, in an affair of the utmost importance. The word *solicit* appeared, to me, to be incompatible with justice. Her only request, she said, was, that the judges would be pleased to accelerate judgment.—But surely all causes have a just claim to be tried according to their state of priority. The humour or ca-

price

price of the magistrate has no right whatsoever either to retard or advance them.

The French may call our Indian manners barbarous, if they will, but among us, they would not find such a licence for the granting of favours. After waiting three years for an audience, the lady said to me, with tears in her eyes, "Is it possible that you, who are called a race of savages, can suffer, in your country, such acts of injustice as we every day, experience ? We have two dangerous rocks to avoid ;—the eloquence of our counsellor, and the craft of our attorney. The one receives part of our money for his fine speeches, and the other tricks us out of the rest with his pleas and demururs, that drive the poor client to desperation."

Is this, said I, to myself, the Parisian civilization, that is so highly extolled throughout the world ? Thou wouldst be as much alarmed at these evils as I am ;
and

and without doubt thou wouldst agree with me in opinion, that it is much better to be six thousand leagues from Paris, notwithstanding all its attractions, than to remain there, and receive such indignities. The paradise described by our holy prophet, is the only place where we shall enjoy a most delicious peace, and whence rapine and injustice will be eternally banished.

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LETTER VIII.

TO GLAZIR.

THERE is not a country in the world where men's fortunes are more disproportioned than in France. The most frightful indigence is found close by the side of luxurious opulence,—even among the nobility themselves. These prodigies, which are continually changing sides under a government like that of France, proceed from distributive justice being neglected, in order to render a junto the arbitrators of rewards:—a set of interested men, who give every thing to some, and nothing to others. Whoever may be the receivers, merit is, of course, disregarded, and suffered to perish in obscurity.

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The *finance* is another species of disorder, which calls the louder for redress, inasmuch as men who are the most intriguing, or the most silly and confident, pass, in the twinkling of an eye, from indigence to the bosom of luxury. They feast on the pleasantest productions of the earth, and drink the most delicious wines from cups of silver and gold. I shall never forget how I was struck, when I first came within sight of Paris, with the beauty of the houses that encircled the city. I was curious to learn the quality of their owners: but thou canst not conceive how great was my surprize when, instead of the titles of dukes and princes, which I expected to hear, I learn'd only the names of obscure people. It was in vain to search for these in the almanack of noblesse: I found nothing there that, in the least, resembled them. They were a set of men who, by some means or other, had gained possession of these delightful abodes, but who boasted no other titles but arrogance, and the glory

of

of having enriched themselves at the expence of the widow and the orphan.

I sighed, and said to myself, "Alas! much rather would I possess the humble mansions, and the little gardens of the East, than purchase these stately palaces at such a price!"——Adieu.

LETTER IX.

GLAZIR to ZATOR.

THY letters are as welcome to me as the assurance of a speedy recovery to him who believes himself to be on the verge of the tomb: and I should be embarrassed to inform thee which has received from them the greatest satisfaction,—my soul or my heart; my imagination or my memory. I watch thy

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footsteps,

footsteps, my only friend, while thou sojournest beyond the clouds and vapours that have long concealed thee from my view. Were I as nimble as they, thou shouldst soon see me in thy presence.

Thy wives, thy children, thy slaves,—all have assumed a new being by kissing, a thousand and a thousand times, the letter which thou hast written to me. So grateful did they find its contents that they have almost annihilated the paper in pressing it to their lips. These are voluptuous enjoyments, intended only for superior souls.

Thy observations on Paris are equally instructive and agreeable. Thou writest in such a manner as almost to persuade us that we are upon the spot. Thy wit does not favour of the ridiculous affectation that is displayed in the writings of the French, which are sometimes imported into our dominions. I find, in thy letters, the solidity that I love, and the dictates of reason, that ought never to be forgotten.

Glad

Glad am I to find that our ambassadors are pleased with Paris. A difference of manners and contrast of opinions generally prevent us from being perfectly satisfied, in the most agreeable countries. Every body does not think in the same manner, nor see with the same eyes. I am sure that, of the French that have visited our country, the one half has flattered, and the other half turned us into ridicule. And, indeed, how should it be otherwise? The habits and prepossessions of childhood are terrible things to combat with, and they are but seldom effectually conquered.

I often walk in that little solitary place where we formerly used to read the Peruvian Letters. Moments of which, perhaps, I should have no recollection, if thou wert not so far removed from me, present themselves incessantly to my imagination. As often as I look upon thy late habitation, I tremble with apprehension! The fear of seeing thee no more is the cause of this involuntary trouble.

Send

Send me all the news that thou art able to collect respecting the wars of the Russians, Turks and Austrians. Is Joseph, or the Sultan, the conqueror? We can gain no intelligence of their combats, but what is extremely confused, and as difficult to be understood as Milton's battles of the devils and angels.

Every thing here is perfectly calm. The Marhattas have always warring hearts, but their arms are quiet. Adieu,—my soul is in this letter, and it only remains for me to solicit thy return.

Thy last born promises to be a hero, and he will fulfil his word. His eyes already sparkle when we talk to him of war: and he told us, the other day, that he wished to arrive at the age of twenty years, when he thought he should be able to kill all the Marhattas.

LETTER

LETTER X.

TO GLAZIR.

SURGERY in Paris is arrived at the summit of perfection. "Our practitioners cut off an arm, said an elegant woman to me the other day, in so dextrous a method, that the patient does not perceive his loss." Rather tell me, replied I laughing, by what method the operation may be made to give him pleasure?

Strangers run in crowds to learn this necessary art, which ought never, indeed, to have been separated from physic. By the practice of surgery, even doctors would become more learned: for there is more than one physician in the world who is entirely ignorant of anatomy. Thou
would'st

would'ft be aftonifhed to fee the quantity of instruments that are ufed in chirurgical operations. I have fatisfied my curiofity on this head, by traversing, with an eye of curiofity, the fuperb edifice, in which the furgeons meet together. It is called a mafter-piece of architecture. Pity it is, however, that this building is much darkened by an adjoining church, but almoft all the fuperior kind of buildings have here the fame inconvenience. The French are fo niggardly in this particular, that they will fpoil the fabric, to fave a morfel of ground.

The univerfal dread in which furgeons were formerly held, prevented many cures. Rather than place themfelves under their care, people lingered through all diforders, and fuffered inexpressible torments. Thefe fears were, at firft, well founded: but furgeons are now called the favours of the human race. Their dexterity in their profeflion, every day, performs wonderful cures. Even patients themfelves are forced to confeß
that

that their method of operation is less painful than the disease. Nevertheless, my dear Glazir, there is scarcely a single operation of this sort, but what is much to be dreaded. Even the opening of a vein, or the drawing of a tooth, altho' so often practised, is subject to the most terrible effects. Custom has, however, taught us to brave these dangers.

What would'st thou say to the generosity of a female who, unfortunately, having had a tendon pierced by a surgeon, so as to make her a cripple for life, settled an annuity upon him as a compensation for the loss of business and reputation that was, of course, the consequence of such an accident? This heroism of a Frenchwoman deserves to be made public in India; and ought to be handed down to the latest posterity.

We are at a loss for the nimble fingers of Frenchmen, when directed by genius, particularly in desperate cases, where we have no other resource, but a resort to fatality: as if the Almighty had ordained

that our liberty should depend upon his prescience. A dervise of the christian religion explained this grand mystery to me, the other day, in as sensible a manner as it could be explained in a country where the decrees of the eternal are seen only enigmatically. Mark his explanation.—

“ You are come to Paris, said he, not because God has pre-ordained it so, but because he foresaw that under such circumstances, in such a year, and on such a day, you would, of your own free will, determine to appear in this city. Thus, whatever you transact does not happen necessarily, but it happens infallibly. The case appears to be like that of a person who tumbles from an eminence and whose fall you, for instance, had foreseen. It is not the glance of your eyes that overthrows him, but his own imprudence.— You will tell me that an all powerful being ought to have prevented such a misfortune: but if he has willed that his creatures should be free, he must, of

course, have left them their choice of good and evil. Otherwise, how could they possess either merit or demerit?—And here we may exclaim: “Is it for the creature to interrogate his creator, or to demand an account of his actions? The governor of the universe, without doubt, has done what was proper and equitable.”

“There will always remain something incomprehensible on this head, said our doctor, wisely: otherwise God would not be God,—for if we were able to understand him, we should be what he is—we should partake of his divine nature.

“This reasoning we ought all to coincide with, lest we should fall into the errors of those madmen who dare to catechise an incomprehensible being, respecting his designs, which are so much above our understanding that we must be *himself* before we can comprehend them. All religions are silent when the incomprehensibility of an infinite being is called in question.”—

I will

I will adore in silence! The doctor's reasons were excellent, and thou wilt have found them such, because they are not less conformable to the Alcoran than to the gospel of Jesus. Never has our great prophet undertaken to overleap the barrier that separates us from the eternal: nor did he ever believe that mortal man would succeed in such an enterprize.

Thou findest that Paris, all frivolous as she is, possesseth men of enlightened understandings, and that, notwithstanding the irreligion which we reproach her with, her inhabitants acknowledge the omnipotence of that great Being to whom every knee shall bow. Her impieties are merely the extravagancies of youth or the wanderings of a libertine spirit. The wise man, whatever may be his age, will breathe nothing but the love of order, and the respect due to the supreme Being.

May heaven glorify thee according to the lustre of thy virtues; and thou wilt be perfectly happy.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

TO GLAZIR.

MEN are here only men by halves, if we may be permitted to judge of them by the books they publish: which are composed only of unimportant and frivolous scenes of gallantry. Fortunately for them, however, they do not write as they act. Their works are merely a debauch of the imagination, and not the dictates of the heart. He who gives a book to the public, thinks only of the quantity of sheets it contains: yet he is willing to be in the fashion, and to lay under heavy contributions those very follies of the age which he professes to ridicule.

I would

I would have written a pious romance if I had lived in the sixteenth century, said a young author to me, in the sincerity of his heart, but in these days I should only draw contempt upon myself, were I to publish such productions. When I first came to Paris, I set furiously to work upon a publication, replete with sound maxims; but my book did not go off. I had occasion for ready money, and therefore took another method, and mixed with the beaux-esprits, of whom continued he, there is not one that would not change his style, were religion and morality once more to come in fashion.

Thou wilt think it singular enough that our wisdom, as well as our clothes and furniture, should be moulded to the custom of the times. That is to say, that our opinions should be light and superficial as the paper on which we write them; and our honour changeful as the most fleeting colours. And yet it is just thus on the verge of the year 1800;—an epocha,

epocha, however, in which the national fickleness of character, and state vicissitudes of the French, will be dismissed, and entirely done away.

On the first day of this new century, it will doubtless be pleasant enough to see the whole world awakened, as it were, from a dream, and thinking in a new manner. In times long past, people spoke of morality with satisfaction, because they had nothing to reproach themselves with: now, when they are tired with those who converse on the subject, they sport with, and deride it, through fear of examining their own hearts. Such are men when they shake off the yoke of honour and of conscience.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

TO GLAZIR.

NOTHING is more true than that the Turks, vigorously attacked by the Russians and Austrians, are endeavouring with all their might to repel them: nothing is more true than that the smaller fortresses which were intended to be carried by assault, are defending themselves with incredible ardour: nothing is more true than that the Ottomans, instructed in the method of beating their enemies, engage only in petty skirmishes, with a design to undermine them, and by degrees render them defenceless. And it may be depended upon, that, on this occasion, they have been well advised.

Some

Some pretend that the Turks are, in the mean while, well disciplined, and in a condition for carrying on the war with all possible success: others say that they are without order or regularity, and that a single blow would effect their destruction. And what is most astonishing, these very men who give such contrary opinions respecting the matter, have all dwelt in Constantinople.—But there are short views, and views that are further distant.

Such is the situation of affairs. The Swedes declare against the Muscovites; Prussia begins to look about her; and Poland can only complain, being still sick with the blows she has received, and not able to resist two mighty powers that surround her, nor willing to depend upon a monarch who dreads Russia, as if it were a burning furnace.

Thou wilt be but slightly interested in this news, if we except that concern which every man ought to feel for the general cause of humanity. Even with
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the assistance of the chart that shews the divisions of Turkey, it would be difficult to draw her horoscope.

No people in the known world seize upon national disputes with greater avidity than the Parisians, who encourage, disguise, decide, and often occasion them. They make them the instruments of commerce, which a zeal for novelties generally turns into ready money. Thou art too distant to procure these curiosities; but, as the happiness of our lives does not depend upon them, they may be dispensed with. There are, doubtless, other objects by which thou art occupied, inasmuch as there is not a single man upon the earth, however solitary he may be, who does not pursue some object, which happens to strike his taste.

What I am most concerned for in this war, is the fate of Poland, who, notwithstanding her bravery and good intentions, finds herself unable to regain her ancient possessions. The manner in which she has been divided, has sharpened the

the appetites of the Russians and Austrians, to such a degree that they are about to strip and plunder the Turks, as well as the Polanders. They have experienced the success of one project, and hope to be equally prosperous in another.

To dare is sometimes sufficient to insure the greatest advantages. Temerity has made heroes, in all times, and in all climates; for, valour is never more intrepid than when she is void of reflection.

LETTER

L E T T E R XIII.

SOLIMA TO ZATOR.

IT is in vain that Tippo Saib endeavours to make us happy. I shall never taste of felicity till I have thee in my possession. The love thou hast possessed for me, at different times, in a greater or lesser degree, has ever been the standard of my happiness; and as I believe thee to be the tenderest and most faithful of husbands, I think of nothing but of thy person and thy virtues. The live-long day, I hear nothing but the cries of thy children, who call upon thy name, and who languish to embrace thee. Just Heaven! art thou so far removed from thy wretched family? I lose myself in the painful idea! May the winds that shall waft thee hither be swif-

ter

ter than lightening. ' If they were endued with perception ; they would be proud to offer thee their services. Thy virtues will ward off the most dreadful tempests, which, at sight of thee, will return to the horrid caverns whence they came : and the ocean, under thy feet, will change itself into a polished mirror, where thou mayest view thy celestial image. If the inhabitants of Paris knew the worth of Zator, they would never suffer him to depart, and I should be eternally a widow. If thou lovest me, thou wilt feel the impression of my kisses on thy cheeks, although we are separated by five thousand cruel leagues. Adieu,—a thousand times, adieu!—

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

TO GLAZIR.

THE Physicians at Paris, who are always habited in black, appear to be in mourning for the persons whom they dispatch to the infernal regions, and to the elysian fields. It is the fashion to rail against this fraternity when we are in health, and to summon them with great earnestness when we are indisposed. Notwithstanding such raileries they are a well educated corps, and compose a numerous society.

They are called doctors, and, very often, those who have the most practice are the least learned. It is enough, however, that they visit the great: for on such a recommendation every body calls them in, though

though at the risk of being slain by their hands. This puts me in mind of a little adventure, in which a physician was the principal actor ; and, as it is to the purpose, I will endeavour to relate it :

A fashionable woman, with a fine face, and most agreable figure, arrives at Lyons, with a design to procure herself a husband. She gives it out that she is the widow of an officer, and begins to look out for some rich old miser who might be desirous of a companion. After being informed that a doctor, very wealthy, very avaricious, very aged, and without children, had recently lost his wife, she keeps to her bed, feigns sickness, and sends for him, in much apparent haste. Her rosy cheeks had, well nigh, betrayed her : but, in order to deceive him into a belief that her disorder is inflammatory, she declares that the heat of her bosom occasions her to feel the most poignant anguish. The doctor begs to look at the seat of the disorder ; but she replies, with seeming horror, that she can never consent

sent to such a request ; and that a confidence of such a nature ought not to be placed in any man, but a husband. The next day the same difficulty offers,—again the day following,—and again the day after that. At length the doctor declares, with a firm tone that he will visit her no more, unless she makes the exhibition he has demanded.

After many airs of affectation, the fair adventurer sighs, and consents : and the doctor, although weighed down with infirmities, is not able to hold out against such a tempting spectacle. He falls at the feet of the pretended sick person, and exclaims, “ Alas ! you imagine that you are afflicted with disease, but it is I alone who am, at this moment, attacked by a raging fever.”—In short, he is fired with love, and a marriage, a few days afterwards, is the consequence. The bride, by causing her husband to dress to the best advantage, makes him young again ; the old furniture is banished from the house ; a splendid dinner is, every day, served

served up to a party of *bons vivants* : and when the doctor is slyly informed that his wife has been the widow, not of a single officer, but of a whole regiment, he replies, " The better part of my life has been spent in cherishing a sordid virtue by which I have been sufficiently punished : suffer me to finish agreeably the few days that remain, in the enjoyment of an amiable vice."

Thou findest that he was a man who knew how to determine wisely.—I respect the faculty, but I endeavour, as much as possible, to keep them at a distance. I am afraid even of the air that surrounds them, which appears to be impregnated with distempers.

Some people, here, are friends to inoculation, while others hold a contrary opinion. I listen to all, but contradict none. A duchess lately fell out with her physician, because he did not think her lap-dog worthy of the honours of inoculation. Not long ago, I overheard an old doctor giving the following advice to a

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young

young practitioner : “ Let it be your maxim always to pronounce your patient in the utmost danger : first, because, should he happen to die, you will have prophesied well ; secondly, because, in case he should recover, you will gain much more credit, as you will be supposed to have snatched him from the very gates of death ; and, lastly, because you will receive larger fees.”

I did not lose a syllable of this discourse, which was held in the *Palais Royal*, where every idle and scandalous tale is generally propagated. There is no project but what is here brought upon the carpet, no minister that is not here displaced, no judgment, good or bad, that is not here formed upon authors and events, no news that is not here manufactured and published. What a number of curious dissertations, if we could either hear, or read them ! The collections of a single day would furnish us with amusement for a year. We should find wit contrasted with stupidity, knowledge with ignorance, avarice with prodigality,

gality, meanness with generosity, eloquence with verbosity, opulence with misery, arrogance with modesty, subtilty with candour, folly with reason. How great would be thy surprize if thou shouldst find thyself suddenly transplanted among these wranglers? Thou wouldst conclude the whole to be a vision: and, when all comes to all, we do no more than dream! Were we to estimate what is done and said among men, we should find that those things to which we give the greatest importance, are but splendid trifles; and that, illusion for illusion, those of the night, and of the day, are nearly the same. At the last hour, all we have seen appears to have been a vision!

Thou desirest me to send thee a Danish dog: but what would be the consequence? Those animals generally die, among us, a violent death, unless they be stolen; and this disturbs us at a time when we have more reasonable incitements to affliction. With respect to myself, I seek no other amusement but that of writing to thee,

as often as possible. Where wilt thou be, and how employed, when this letter shall arrive?

My imagination can almost trace thee to thy dwelling; for imagination is a magnificent present from the gods. Thro' its means, the absent are in my presence, the dead live, and the whole world is placed before my eyes.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

TO GLAZIR.

I ONCE imagined that there was but little energy among the Parisians, on account of the frivolities by which they are surrounded. These trifles, however, I find, have no effect upon their souls. Of this truth, I had, yesterday, the clearest evidence. All the citizens of Paris abandoned themselves to the highest degree of indignation, in a manner indeed almost incredible, on account of two great personages that had been dismissed from their employments, and with whom there was every reason to be dissatisfied. The populace made even coachmen descend from their carriages, to prostrate themselves before the statue of Henry the Fourth, and
to

to vent the most terrible execrations upon the ministers in question. These facts, which I shall soon be able to explain more at large, are inserted in all the gazettes. Never did England herself demonstrate a greater portion of effervescence. While this fury was bursting forth against the delinquents, the return of a favourite minister, whom the king had just recalled, for the good of the nation, was celebrated by fire-works.

The blood which thus catches fire in the veins, against men obnoxious to society, and in favour of virtuous counsellors, I could almost call royal. There is still some degree of virtue, there is some degree of honour upon the earth; which convinces me, that both may be obscured, but that they will never be entirely rooted up. Popular commotions are, nevertheless, to be feared, and ought to be repressed, but the motives that occasioned them, if they be good, should not be condemned. The virtuous minister of a virtuous prince is an affecting and interesting spectacle :

spectacle : a spectacle indeed that excites tears of joy and gladness.

This century has taken a leap beyond all others. I do not like its presumptuousness in endeavouring to measure man with his Creator ; but I am enchanted when I see it rising above flattery, and speaking truth, without apprehension of danger. Every different age is marked by some singularity. We shall see what will be the characteristic of that which is soon to arrive.

I embrace thee, in the effusions of my heart, as one who doubles my pleasures, and my being.

LETTER

LETTER. XVI.

GLAZIR to ZATOR.

THOU tellest me nothing of the manner in which we are spoken of at Paris. Are we there reckoned of any consequence? Here we believe ourselves to be elephants, and perhaps we are, in Europe, no larger than emmets. The presence of our ambassadors must often render us the objects of consideration. Are we praised or blamed?—The life of our hero, the immortal *Hyder-Ali*, which has been published far and near, has, of course, awakened curiosity on our account. I am zealous for my country, and I love, to excess, those who commend her, without hating others who are clamorous in her dispraise; for, as to the latter,

latter, they are ignorant of her worth. I am certain that the inhabitants of Paris can hardly believe that *Hyder Ali* was a lover of comedies, that he kept a court, that he understood good breeding, and that he knew how to be gracious and bountiful: for, after the report that has been made to me of their prejudices, I have no doubt of their regarding every thing beyond the seas, as dreadfully rude and unpolished. Yet they ought to recollect that those very seas have, a thousand times, been burdened with ships, that brought us the fashions and merchandizes of France. They should also remember that their India company became, between them and us, a bond of interest and friendship. India was formerly a country unknown to France; but commerce has broken down those barriers that appeared to be immoveable and everlasting. We see add speak to each other, notwithstanding the immense distance between *Paris* and *Pondicherry*, between *Marseilles* and *Goa*. May it please Heaven to bind still closer the union that was established

in 1601, by a society formed in Brettany. At that time two vessels were dispatched, in order to partake, if possible, of those oriental treasures, for which the Portuguese, the English, and the Hollanders, were greedily contending. It is well known that, ever since the year 1535, a small armament set sail for the Indies, but that *Genorville*, who commanded it, was overtaken, at the Cape of Good Hope, by a violent tempest, and that, after various disasters, he had the greatest difficulty in the world to regain the shores of Europe. It is known also that the word India is derived from the river Indus, in Asia: in short, that this is the chosen land; particularly if attention be paid to the pure skies that are here predominant, to the riches it produces, to the delicious rivers by which it is watered, to its commerce which places it on a footing with the first countries in the world, and inspires it with the greatest activity. In another point of view, its revolutions render its history particularly interesting: for if we

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judge

judge merely from the extraordinary facts it contains, its history seems less a faithful narrative than a romance.

Thou findest, my dear Zator; that I am a good Indian, and that I cannot speak of my country without enthusiasm; especially when I recollect that thou art one of its brightest ornaments.

We shall languish here till thy return. Thy presence will revive our country, and cause thy friends to be regenerated. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

TO GLAZIR.

THE RE are women in this city who never grow old, coquets who pretend to be but thirty years of age when they are in fact fifty, and ladies of quality who are well versed in the knowledge of the world. These last have the art of making us forget their age, so much are we interested by their cultivated understandings, their lively anecdotes, and their manners, altogether agreeable. Even young men cannot quit them without difficulty; for they enchain all who listen to them. They have, more than once, imposed upon academicians themselves, who really are afraid to discharge their wit in the presence of these ladies. But a person who
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is skilled in the fashions of a court, has always the advantage over those who excel only in phrases. I am often found in the society of these belles, than whom no people on earth can be more amiable, especially when they are in their own houses. I there find myself in the centre of politeness and liberty. Young people, in my opinion, can no where complete their education so well as in such schools. Having no longer any pretensions to coquetry, and as their whole amusement is conversation, the ladies I have mentioned are infinitely more engaging than those silly women who run after wit without being able to overtake it, and play the parts of idiots through motives of pride or affectation.

Our Indian societies, it must be acknowledged, do not possess such advantages. Our women, having never seen the world, can only talk of their housewifery, or of old romances whose dates cannot be ascertained, and which are nothing but a complication of fables and burlesque tragedies. With us, one is absolute

lutely at a loss to know what is meant by a female courtier. It belongs only to Europe to understand and to train up persons of the softer sex for such employments.

The questions thou askest me, relating to India, are to no purpose. Even in Paris the news of Paris cannot easily be gathered, and yet thou wishest me to be informed of all that passeth in our own country! At Versailles they say nothing, yet at Versailles they know every thing. It is well that thou knowest, as I have already informed thee, that Paris is an assemblage of many cities: that one part of it is a stranger to the other part; and that for as many persons as it contains there are so many different interests and opinions.

The other evening I heard a young man say pretty loudly, "I promise myself much amusement, for I am going to sup at a house where they are all dealers in news; and I shall be stilled with anecdotes. There are no novelties brought on the carpet, in
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this society, he continued, but what are said to have been received at *first hand*. The prince, the duchess, the minister, are eternally the subjects of conversation." It is not asserted without reason, that vanity never loses her rights. If we do not find her on one side, we meet her on the other, but so much disguised that she can scarcely be known.

LETTER

L E T T E R. XVIII.

T O G L A Z I R.

W H A T a delicious festival! what a repast! what a society!—Such were the exclamations of all who were present. The female who presided, although the wife of a lawyer, approved herself as amiable as a lady of quality. She was witty without affectation; handsome without demanding applause,—in a word, she fascinated all her guests.

Chance invited me to this assembly, at a country mansion, inhabited by the graces, and of which fairies appeared to have been the architects. The amusement was general:—nobody was haughty, nobody reserved. We all laughed in good earnest, unlike persons of high rank, who, in these

these degenerate times, have nothing but affected smiles upon their countenances. Every one was witty, because no one pretended to be a wit. A numerous company joined us in the evening, of which I was curious to know the history. I ventured therefore to put question after question to a clever personage who was seated by my side. My quality as a stranger excused my indiscretion, and he was neither surprised nor offended at my curiosity.

“ The person whom you see arrayed in black, said he, is a senior controulor-general of finance, who has experienced the fortune of many of his fraternity. He passed through the office like a cloud, or rather like a flash of lightning,—for I avoid all reflections. You must know, he continued, that there is nothing more ticklish than a place of such importance. Formerly people did very well in it, because they did nothing; but, since the change of administration, matters have daily gone on worse and worse, till the very moment that there arose, among us,
a repairer

a repairer of our wrongs, a man, in short, whose integrity is equal to his wonderful abilities.

“ With respect to the person, yonder, who looks so gay and good-humoured, he is what is vulgarly called a jolly companion, who has expended one third of his fortune among actresses, another in travelling, and is finishing the last in the fabrication of English gardens. He is arrived almost at the last guinea of an immense fortune; nor has he made the least provision for the latter days of his life,—unless he should happen to die to-morrow !”

And that lady, said I, whom I should call grey-headed, did not common civility forbid such an expression?

“ She is, said he, the daughter of an overgrown city lady, who was first the wife of a financier, afterwards of a count, and is now upon the point of being a duchess; for among us, such changes are not in the least surprising,—the most insignificant tradesman’s daughter being of-
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ten transformed into a woman of high quality. There was formerly a marshal's lady who, being sprung from the dregs of society, caused her relations to enter her chamber once a month by a private stair-case, unknown to her husband, when she said to them, " Were my lord to see you here, he would order you to be thrown out of the window, like a vile rabble as you appear in his eyes ; take care, therefore, that he does not come, and surprize you. As to myself, I will always own you in the dark and by twilight, but I will abandon you for ever, if you should dare to discover my parentage, or accost me in broad day-light."

And that abbé, so magnificently frizzled and powdered, who strokes his chin with such complacence ?

" The abbé is a negociator of benefices, for bank notes. He is the admirer of that unwieldy woman, you see by his side. There is a pleasant history respecting him. —It is said that a set of gamblers, with whom he had lost his all, made him intoxicated,

toxicated, wrapped him up in swaddling-clothes, and exposed him at the gate of the Foundling Hospital, with a ticket fastened to his neck, which announced to the public that he had never been baptized. It is added that one of the sisters who are the governesses of these orphans, was preparing to have the ceremony of baptism conferred upon him, by plain strength, when chance discovered his sacerdotal character. The abbé eclipsed himself, and appeared no more in public till the affair dropped into oblivion: that is to say, he came forth at the end of a few days, which, in Paris, is a sufficient time to efface the remembrance of any event, whether tragic or comic. As to that man, six feet high, continued he, whom you see so well dressed, he is one of the recruits of an extravagant baroness who goes to Spa every year, in search of a cook, whom she generally sends back within a few months.”—

“ He gave me sketches of many other characters, which have, however, escaped my

my memory. We travel pleasantly thro' a country, with such a guide.

I enjoy a spectacle, every evening that pleases me wonderfully. A number of lights are distributed through the city, which seem to recall day-light into the bosom of night. A prodigious quantity of them are seen on both sides of the *Seine*, which altogether form a brilliant illumination. Sometimes I wish it were in my power to summon thee to this charming spot,—but, alas!—

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

 TO GLAZIR.

THE times which Boileau so bitterly complained of, when every violence was committed on words, for the purpose of bristling up conversation with ridiculous points, are returned in a most alarming manner. I am sorry to observe that the French language, which has been so much cherished by all strangers, is injured by the French themselves, who alter the true signification of words in searching for extravagancies.

A fantastical preacher lately observed in his sermon that death had performed such extraordinary changes, that Les moines devenoient

devenoient des moineaux, les papes des papillons, les rois des roitelets *.

But there is something still worse than all this :——I allude to *charrades*, which are commonly devoid of common sense, and which impoverish the language to such a degree, that people are afraid to speak it, lest they should stumble upon equivoques.

Men who would pass for wits generally take refuge in such fooleries when they are defeated in argument. Eloquence has been put to the torture, by the efforts that have been used, to make such jargon intelligible. They torment words in order to make them say every thing that they do not mean.

Paris is really a country of maniacs, with respect to fashions, as well as to societies. The mind turns and turns again, in a thousand different ways ;—but in a large city, like this, there must necessarily be trifles and follies, and likewise silly and

* This string of puns appears to be untranslatable.

impertinent

impertinent people,—which altogether form the basis of comedy. A capital where there should be a tiresome monotony of good sense would be insupportable:—it would resemble those Hans-towns in Germany, which appear to subsist only for the purpose of perplexing travellers. Nothing within them is pleasing, nothing is interesting: they are bodies without motion and without life. Paris, being so situated as never to be made the seat of war, has occasion for literary battles, continual variations of fashion, and fluxes and refluxes of trifles, in order to attract the stranger, and engage his attention. Thus, as the sage Leibnitz, a philosopher with whom thou art not unacquainted, once said, “ Every thing works together towards some good end.” Those ignorant pretenders to science who suppose that our countrymen are all barbarians, would hardly believe that we have our sentiments with regard to the greatest philosophers. I shall not attempt

attempt to undeceive them, because prejudiced persons are not easily cured.

Our ambassadors will depart in the very moment when they begin to relish Paris. It is a city that cannot be well known, but by a long residence, and by the frequenting of its various societies. We must pass from the higher class to the lower, ere we can form a just estimate of its inhabitants.

Read this letter, I conjure thee, in the midst of our friends: for it is a passport to my friendship, and will conduct my sentiments to thy bosom without delay or impediment.

E LETTER

LETTER XX.

TO GLAZIR.

BOOKS are made here like cheese-cakes, a sort of pastry that resembles our *krink*. The bookseller orders, and the author composes with wonderful rapidity. He invents a handsome title, he takes up his pen, which he suffers to gallop forward, as fast as it is able, and he is himself astonished to see his work so expeditiously finished. This without doubt appears to be ridiculous: but authors pretend that, in works of imagination, the first hit is often worth more than the most far fetched ideas. It is a fire, kindled and extinguished in the same moment, without being suffered to languish and grow dull. Every hour of the day, au-

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tumn excepted, when the country is most frequented, produces a new book. This is no fable.—There are persons who buy books for no other reason than because they are new. “This pamphlet was published yesterday, said a fashionable woman to the wife of a bookseller, and it is a mark of your impertinence to recommend such antique rubbish. Know that I yesterday discharged one of my servants, and one of my spaniels, because they began to grow old.” This elegant lady had seen at least five and forty years, but she attempted to hide them under a superb veil, and affected an infantine tone of voice, as another testimony of her youth. The greater part of these books, which are continually regenerated, and which are nothing but everlasting repetitions ingeniously disguised, perish in a moment. They are no more asked for, no more heard of—unless, which is seldom the case, they are sustained by acute moral reflections.

E. e.

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What a contrast between this country and ours, with regard to books and book-selling ! But our Alcoran would be disfigured, and our manners enervated, were we to make books. The human mind is under no government, nor is it able to contain itself, when allowed to give a loose to its ideas. Here, in order to suppress a vicious book, they burn it ; but, like the Phoenix, it springs up, in a wonderful manner, from its own ashes. It is then that it is sought for by all nations of the world ; and, even if it possess neither elegance nor good sense, it is quickly reprinted. “ How happy shall I be, said a hair-brained writer, if my book is condemned to the flames ! Instead of lying idly on the counter, it will then take a sudden spring, and we shall see it upon every chimney-piece.”

This last is a place where the Parisians deposit their gazettes, their pamphlets, their flowers, their letters, their cards of invitation, their addresses. They have an incredible vanity in garnishing their mantels

mantels with such precious trifles. It would doubtless be difficult for us to use the same means in India, chimney-pieces being there unknown. Where we have the sun so near us, we stand in need of no other fire.—I embrace thee everlastingly.

RETTED LETTER
 This is a place where the Persians
 deposit their gazettes, their pamphlets,
 their flowers, their letters, their cards or
 invitation, their addresses. They have
 a great many in garden, in
 every chimney-piece, in every
 garden, and we shall see it upon
 the counter, it will then take a
 the flames! Instead of lying
 hair-brained writer, it may book is con-
 printed: "How happy shall I be, said a
 elegance nor good sense, it is quickly re-
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 contain itself, when allowed

LETTER XXI.

TO GLAZIR.

I FEAR lest my last should have given thee too disadvantageous an idea of the employment of those talents that are really eminent in Paris. I have told thee only of what is frivolous; I have not informed thee that, amongst a thousand futilities, works of genius are continually springing up, which are equally profound and well written. French genius is like fire, that escapes in sparks, in transitory flashes, and in majestic flames. Here it sparkles, there it warms—sometimes it is agreeable, sometimes useful. All sciences and all subjects have been treated with success, by the French. If, my dear friend, we had but the thousandth part
of

of their works, we might compare ourselves with the most civilized nations.—

Ah! why are we not Europeans? In our climate, in our soil, in our warriors, we have enough to support the greatest names, and the most splendid glory; but here, it may be said, Heaven has given infinitely too much!

I will bring the manuscript thou desirest. At present the librarian who has delivered it to me, knows not how to fix its price. The king's library is full of such works, but they are carefully guarded. As these writings are liable to perish by worms or by fire, they ought in my opinion to be put into print, particularly those that are difficult to be decyphered.

I was lately invited to a bull-beating, and curiosity led me to a spectacle from which my heart revolted. Even brutes ought not to be treated with cruelty.

After this savage diversion was over, I was asked in familiar discourse, if the Creator, when prepared to make a man, could form a dog, a cat, a bird, in short
whatever

whatever he pleased out of the same matter. “ As our peculiar method of existence was determined by the cast of a die, said an amiable philosopher who was present, and as we were ordained by the eternal decrees to become what we are, I call this question idle and unimportant: and I am clearly of the opinion that God, always immutable in his designs, could perform no such exploit. Man, with God, was *in petto* from all eternity, inasmuch that we must have had our share in the grand promotion which the omnipotent Being made, in the moment of the creation, even before that creation had existence.

The ancients were fertile in such systems, which were fabricated among them, every hour, but which possessed not common sense. Nay, even some doctors of the Christian religion have been tainted with these idle fancies. The human mind, on whatever sphere it rolls, is sensible of its own impotency and weakness. Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXII.

TO ZATOR.

THOU talkest to me of Paris, thou talkest of its charms, of its extent, of its environs, of its lettered men and unlettered men, and, in the mean time, thou tellest me nothing with regard to its trade. The commerce of a metropolis like this must necessarily be splendid and extensive.

Although it is not a sea-port, like London, Paris must of course traffic in gold, through means of its merchants, who are engaged by that object.

I have been often told that this capital has more nominal riches than any other in the world, but that money is piled up, and hidden, behind triple locks, and two-

fold doors of iron. Ah! if they be good Frenchmen and love their king, as he deserves to be loved, now is the time to open these repositories. Never will they be able to make a better use of their gold!

Knowing their good qualities, I doubt not, the misers only excepted, they will signalize themselves in this critical juncture of affairs. The heart of a Frenchman is a treasure, of which his king has certainly a right to participate!

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

DURTABEE TO ZATOR.

I QUIT Alexandria, tired of Egypt and the Egyptians. These people were formerly deserving of our visits, when they possessed all the secrets of nature; but, at present, they are a tribe of vagabonds, without the least pretensions to knowledge. It is in vain that we search for the footsteps of the sciences, which long inhabited their soil; we can find nothing but reptiles, rocks, and sands. The sciences are like comets, which sometimes appear in one country, and sometimes in another.

I know not why travellers who give us descriptions of Egypt, maintain so many different opinions. It is a country whose
picture

picture may be easily drawn : a country of ruins, a country of ignorance, and a country that may be compared with Greece which is now but the shadow of itself. Why does not France, since she is so well qualified to teach the arts and sciences,—why does she not become the arbitrator of Egypt ? This would be highly practicable were she to join with the powers that are harrassing the Turks. While her possessions extend to the isles of France and Bourbon, she might easily acquire Egypt, which, in fact, is only from fifteen to twenty days sail from Marseilles.

France, which, at present, cannot boast of a single obelisk, would possess the finest pyramids in the universe ; and from their summits, a king like the emperor of the Franks could have it proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, with much more propriety than a miserable and insignificant Khan of Tartary, that “ All the kings of the earth might go to dinner.” It appears, too, that the Nile would be still more ma-

jestic, under the dominion of France. I often indulge myself with this idea, and think I see even the crocodiles tamed, and obeying the voice of those who call them.

A Parisian belle, adorned with all the graces, and all the elegance of the mode, walking on the banks of the Nile, would work miracles in this way ; and caps *au crocodile* would soon become fashionable.

I shall return with the notions of our elders, who maintain that we can die no where so well as in the country where we were born. Doubtless I shall find many changes ; but man, instructed from his birth by the seasons, that are constantly renewed, and by his thoughts, that drive away each other, must necessarily submit to variation. It appears, besides, from our constitution, which conducts us from infancy to youth, from manhood to decrepitude, from death to a new life,—that we exist only to be changed. Yet our pretended sages wish us to live in a continual monotony. They have divided time according to their fancies, and because they have

have said, " You shall dine at a certain hour ; you shall sleep at such a moment," they have persuaded themselves that such is the spirit of order : as if we could not be disorderly in spite of such painful subjection. Order consists in the government of our passions, in the regulation of our ideas, in the tranquillity of our desires,——briefly, in our being in the possession of ourselves. A life of slavery is fit only for those who live in common : the solitary man neither eats nor sleeps but when he feels a necessity for food or rest.

I have been hurried away by morality, notwithstanding my natural gaiety, which I shall always esteem, because my gaiety has ever been reasonable. But it will be much more so in the moment that shall bring thee to my presence. Then will my soul appear to expand like the heavens ; and my heart, like a fiery furnace, that pours forth incessant flames, will affect thee with the most lively ardour, and prove that I love thee according to the truth and spirit of our Alcoran.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXIV.

TO GLAZIR.

THE grand props of the Parisian commerce, are the variation of fashions, and the progress of book-selling. It is incredible what riches these two articles produce to government. On this account many kicknacks and trifling publications are suffered to pass unmolested, which would otherwise be seized. In order to have a proper idea of their showy bawbles you should see one of the fashionable warehouses where they are fabricated ; these are long buildings where damsels of the most agreeable figure, and decent air, ranged in two separate rows, demonstrate, by the agility of their fingers, how much they are mistresses of their trade.

Nature

Nature is here so perfectly imitated, in artificial flowers, that art scarcely appears her inferior. Here likewise you see muslins so white, and so curiously fringed, that you would take them for flakes of snow. The rainbow seems to descend, every day, upon their garlands and ribands, than which nothing can be better managed, in order to deceive the sight. What is most admirable, they are changed into different shades, in the twinkling of an eye, and every thing appears to be renewed. When the fashions begin to fall off, some splendid name, some singular event, some new epocha, gives birth to a new cap, or plume of feathers, and these become altogether so desirable, that they are purchased at any price :—nay, all the world is in search of them, even to the devotee herself, who appears, indeed, only in the dusk of the evening, but who nevertheless brings money in her pocket.

With respect to the book trade ; the printer, the bookseller, and the paper-merchant are not, of themselves, sufficient

ent to carry it on. " Dear sir, will you print my book ? Dear sir, I shall be proud to purchase it."——This is the language of a thousand bookfellers and authors from morning to night : and it is not a little extraordinary that each of these authors believes he has written a *chef-d'œuvre*. The most insignificant pamphlet is sold at the most extravagant price provided it is sold privately, and that the purchaser is informed by a whisper, that, "It is so extremely clever as to have been prohibited by government. " This is called *selling under the rose*.

Some years ago, a dealer in pamphlets, more adroit than his brethern, took it into his head to exhibit, at places of public entertainment, a little work entitled, *The Devil's Almanack*, which he said was absolutely interdicted. The earnestness of his manner, and his fearful tone of voice rendered the circumstance still more interesting, and, upon no other recommendation than its frontispiece, his auditors were eager to purchase his work, at the price he demanded:

demanded : that is to say, a Louis d'or for each copy. Scarcely, however were they returned, each to his own house, before they discovered the fraud : for this precious book possessed nothing original but its title, the rest being composed of idle stories not worth the twentieth part of a doit. Such is industry!

It would be as difficult a matter to stop the effervescence of wits and wittings as the effect of gunpowder. They will be continually pregnant till an age shall arrive when men will be able neither to write nor read : and posterity will certainly see this wonderful change. When we reflect on the profound ignorance that reigned in Europe, for several ages after that of Augustus, we are authorised in making these predictions.

Nothing is met with in the streets of Paris but hats and caps decorated with ribands ; and this species of commerce is wonderfully promoted by foreigners. French modes are established even on the banks of the Boristhenes, the Ganges, the
 Amazons,

Amazons,—in short, all over the known world. Peasants, favourites, slaves, all are eager to be arrayed in the fashions of the French metropolis. Even a fan, a lace that comes from this city, is regarded as a relic. I regret a thousand times in a day that thou art not placed by my side, as a witness of these extravagancies, which are truly original. The time will certainly come, and I think we are not far removed from such a period, when the ladies will desire to be buried in head-dresses of the newest fashion. What do I say?—The fact is already come to pass.

A princess who lately died at Paris, caused it to be inserted in her will, that it was her wish to be buried in all the fashionable ornaments of the most recent taste. But a fashion, entirely new, happening to make its appearance within two days, and it having been determined that she was not to be buried till the fourth, a law-suit was the inevitable consequence. The executrix of the will, a *petite-maitresse* of the
most

most refined order, insisted that the intentions of the deceased could not be fulfilled unless she were enveloped in ornaments of the latest date; and that as a new mode had arisen since her departure from this world, her express desire ought to be complied with in every particular. The heirs were unwilling to submit to such a fantastical humour, especially as the expence must have been double. The priests were kept in waiting, the coffin was arrested, and every thing remained in suspense, till at length it was decreed that, as the dress had not been ordered for the moment of death, but for that of burial, the corps, previous to its interment, should be decked in the most modern embellishments. As a similar accident was feared—the fashions changing here from hour to hour—the ceremony was hastened, and the princess interred in the vault which she had ordered to be made.

Alas!

Alas ! have we not reason to conclude that the passion of vanity is the last passion of a fine lady ?

Happy are they, according to the declaration of our divine prophet, who carry to the tomb no ornaments, but their virtues !

LETTER

LETTER. XXV.

TO GLAZIR.

I HAVE been to see the house of a dervise. As soon as I appeared at the door, an old man, venerably bearded, received me with a simplicity that did not belong to this age. His conversation, however, proved to me that he was not altogether so artless as his demeanour seemed to promise. I asked him if the priesthood had not abated of their former ardour; and he replied, "Not enough to incur damnation, but sufficiently so not to resemble our holy founder. Believe me, he added, when the bell of a monastery has sounded during two hundred years, the monks must have necessarily relaxed from their original fervour, because, in order to keep

keep the human race within bounds, a change of religion is requisite, at least, every fifty years."

I questioned him respecting the wisdom of his superiors. Of course, said I, not any are elevated to that rank but men of abilities. "You are mistaken, he replied,—Our dervises do not make choice of a man of penetration for their superior. A dervise of subordinate talents is indispensably requisite, to ensure our tranquillity. During a short interval we elected men of genius, but they were too fond of conceits, and airy notions; and in attempting to do right they were sure to commit wrong. In our transactions with them we knew not what foot to put forward; for what they approved in the morning they condemned at night. We complained with reason against such inconstancy, and since that time, our choice has fallen upon none but men of plain sense: not unfrequently indeed we have elected those whom we were able to govern."

And

And upon what foundation, continued I, do you build the revenue of your house?

“Formerly, he replied, it depended upon charity; at present, a little industry is necessary. One of our fraternity is the almoner of a prince, another the counsellor of some old duchess;—but, what is worst of all, we are obliged to tolerate the opinions of these gentry who believe that, with all their gormandizing, their pride, their effeminacy, and their luxury, they shall go to heaven. Were we to act otherwise we should fall under their displeasure, and then, adieu to their protection!”

You preach, without doubt.

“It is our business to pronounce discourses, said he, but we have not time to compose them.”

I had a desire to see the library. The books were dusty, but well chosen. He complained that, devotion being grown cold, the vestry yielded nothing of importance.

And

And your men of genius, said I, if you boast of any, what are they about in the mean while?

“How, he replied, with an half-an-gry countenance, our fathers that make books, and our fathers that are consulted on all occasions, and our fathers that are admitted into all learned societies, are they not men of genius? But, to gain reputation, they ought to have twice the abilities of worldly men; for people are obstinate in believing them to be fools. Here, said he, instead of founding a man’s understanding, they are attentive only to his dress; and when they see him coarsely habited, they are of opinion that he knows nothing. Thus Plato, Diogenes, and Pythagoras, must have been all grossly ignorant, for they were still worse equipped than ourselves.”

The refectory was open while I was going away; and I threw into it a side-long glance.

“Our fathers, said he, come to this place merely to keep themselves from be-

F

ing

ing starved; and were they not, from time to time, invited to the tables of the opulent, by whom they are highly esteemed, they would forget the taste of meat."

I told him I had seen a secular priest who did not profess much regard for the monastic order. " Ah, the wretch! he exclaimed, this indifference is the more terrible because all who are of his profession come hither, on every holiday throughout the year, to bring us sins more huge than mountains, and to extort absolutions. Were we not induced, by our unhappy condescension, to grant their requests, not a creature on earth would be found willing to absolve them:—in a word, we are so complaisant as to damn ourselves, to save them from damnation."

I was much diverted by this fally, and, in that moment, wished for thy company, with all the faculties of my soul.

We

We parted good friends: he, pleased with my simplicity, and I with his politeness and good sense. I promised therefore to call upon him at some future period.—Adieu!

F 2

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

 TO GLAZIR.

NOT a word have I told thee with respect to the king or the court, although I ought to have commenced with these subjects. I wished indeed first to hear the voice of the people, which is always the most to be depended upon. I have learnt from all quarters that the reigning monarch is so strict an admirer of truth, that he might with propriety be surnamed Louis the True, in the same manner as Louis XIII. was honoured with the title of *Just*, and Louis XIV. with the appellation of Louis the Great. His manners are exemplary, and his recreations innocent. He has neither mistresses nor favourites; his personal honours and privileges

leges are sacrificed with alacrity to the general welfare of his subjects ; he is partial to men of probity, and if those of a different description are found near his person, it is because he has been deceived. Thou knowest that he is but thirty-four years old ; and he is recognised throughout the world as the arbiter of sovereigns, and the reconciler of nations. I have seen him several times, and I have always seen him with a smile upon his face. No sooner was he mounted upon the throne than he expressed a wish to receive all the petitions and complaints of his subjects ; but his ministers, always interested in warding off the truth, dissuaded him from such a laudable design.

With regard to the court, it is gloomy and sorrowful, like all other courts in the universe. These places of intrigue, deception, and etiquette, are always the habitations of fullness and melancholy. The visages of those who frequent them sufficiently declare that they come for interested purposes. Happiness is seldom found
under

under gilded roofs. In the drawing-room our smiles are borrowed, while our hearts are under constraint.

I shall say nothing of the magnificence that adorns the castle of Versailles, and its environs. It will be sufficient to inform thee that Louis XIV. whose monuments are all imprinted with the stamp of luxury and grandeur, employed in its execution the most costly materials of art, and those of the most exquisite taste. Yet its architecture is not answerable to its superb paintings. It has been said, with reason, that the edifice has a swallow's body with an eagle's wings.

The gardens have been disfigured by the destruction of the groves, walks, and thickets, for the purpose of making a simple plantation in the form of a quincunx. Formerly we were astonished at every step, and believed the park to be unlimited and immense, so artfully were the grounds laid out, in order to deceive the eyes. But, at present, we see the extremities, which appear at no great distance.

When

When I reflect upon the manner in which different courts have acquired their growth and splendour, I think I perceive a comet which appears an imperceptible speck, but which becomes by degrees a luminous star. Every age has contributed to the magnificence of courts. As a court is the source of the graces, and the focus of the passions, it is crowded with adventurers. Were it not for the inordinate love of riches, titles, and honours, it would be avoided as a place of contagion ; but, for the purpose of favouring ambition, and flattering pride, it has been made a terrestrial paradise, which appears the more natural as it too often nourishes the treacherous serpent, and too often tempts us with the forbidden fruit.

Let us rejoice, my dear friend, in finding ourselves exempted from all those servitudes that must be endured in courts ; and in having neither subjects to govern nor favours to ask. We live under despotism, it is true, but in what region does not this terrible phantom exist ? Slavery

very is bewailed in every part of the world, because all men are, in some degree, slaves. Authority seldom gets a tumble; for if, by chance, a monarch be too weak to preserve his privileges, they are quickly assumed by his inferiors. Nothing is more tyrannical than the domination of ministers, as this country has too often experienced. Had not France, from time to time, been subject to such casualties, she would have been too happy and too powerful. The kings that have governed her, by right of succession, would have become the sovereigns of Europe. But there exists a supreme order which is unknown to us, except by its influence, and which has regulated the course of things in such a way that a distribution of blessings and misfortunes, holds the state in *equilibrio*. Thus France which enjoys the greatest advantages with regard to its soil, and the amiableness of its inhabitants, does not always possess an administration proportioned to the sage views of its monarch. Adieu!

L E T T E R

LETTER XXVII.

NIRISA TO ZATOR.

MY days have been as nights, and my nights as the dark and terrible abyss, since thou hast neglected to write. Alas, I am always in expectation of receiving thy letters, and I am always deceived. I divide myself into a thousand sighs, which overspread continually the surface of the earth, and the mighty waters, in hopes of meeting thee on thy return. Thy other wives, more happy than myself, have gathered together a portion of thy soul, from the letters thou hast transmitted to them; but I, as if I were numbered among the dead who are forgotten, have no consolation but in the cruellest impatience and most dreadful despair. Thy pro-

testations of love have followed the rapidity of the Northern blast; they are mingled with the dust that the wind scatters through the air, and of which no vestige remains;—they are incorporated with the rambling wave that departs to return no more! Ah! that my heart were incapable of love,—that it would become as brass, in order to correspond with thine! What a miserable present from heaven is a soul of sensibility! I have experienced its misfortunes, I am acquainted with its perils. Alas! we remain but a few wretched minutes upon this earth, yet we die every instant. Were it not enough to be, one day, separated by death, without suffering these pangs of absence, scarce less terrible than death itself? What do I say? Absence is surely more terrible than death, because, if we love with sincerity, it causes us to live in continual disquietude!

Thou diggest my grave with thy cruel silence. If, by means of a speaking trumpet; the breath of thy heart could reach
my

my ears.—But no! till I receive that token of life that is reciprocally given in our letters, I will taste no enjoyment.

Is it then my fault if thy two children, the fruit of our love, have fallen victims to a contagious distemper? The tenderness that thou hadst for them ought naturally to devolve upon me: then should I enjoy the heat of a triple attachment. But I have every reason to fear that, in losing thy children, thou hast entirely forgotten their mother. Ah! why am I not rather a slave; I could endure servitude with less pain than thy cruel disdain. I wait in expectation of every calamity, I look for the vilest treatment, nor shall I be surpris'd if thy arrival occasions our eternal separation.

Ah, why hath Nature treated our sex so severely as to make our very existence depend upon the caprice of a husband? Why didst thou not tell me, on the very morning of our nuptials, that thy love was only a phantasy that would be extinguish'd like the transient flame? I should
then

then have retained my heart, of which I was the perfect mistress. But what embraces didst thou lavish upon me, with a view to persuade me that thou wouldst love me eternally! Yes, I swear by the Alcoran, the most sacred thing among us, that I had rather be sacrificed to thy fury and die by thy hands, than suffer such neglect. Notwithstanding my wrath, I ask not heaven to avenge my wrongs. I shall always remember the case of that unhappy woman, who invoked the celestial Being against her husband, and who expired, several days afterwards, in the most horrible paroxysms of madness. It is against myself that I implore the fury of heaven; for, the shorter my life, the longer will be my felicity. I can no longer be happy on earth,—my heart hath pronounced this sentence, and every moment confirms it. I conclude, bathing myself with tears, and calling upon heaven to deprive me of that shadow of existence, which I now barely possess.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

T O N E R I S A .

SUPPOSE I were to tell thee, my dearest Nerisa, that thy fury is the fury of a scold? How! without cause, without a shadow of reason, to abandon thyself to transports so nearly allied to madness! The respect that thou always professedst for the law of our great prophet might have stopped thy wanderings. The three letters that I have written to thee, and which thou hast not received, must necessarily remain in the custody of my principal slave. I give thee liberty to avenge thy wrongs on him who inflicted them; but thou oughtest to have been well informed before thou hadst ventured to treat thy husband with such rigour and

injustice.

injustice. In spite, however, of thy barbarous despair, I have observed that thy love is pure and undissembled. Alas, I never doubted thy sincerity, and I should condemn myself as the most unworthy of husbands if, by a silence equally obstinate and criminal, I had intentionally excited thy frenzy. Let, therefore, those furies that give me so much uneasiness be appeased at the reception of this letter. How is my soul troubled when I think of the pangs thou wilt yet endure ere it reaches thy hands! It comes, however, by the shortest route, that is to say, by way of Alexandria.

This paper, infinitely more happy than I, because it will be in thy possession, would impart wonderful things, if it could tell thee all that my heart experiences. With thy allurements and virtues thou hast nothing to fear from the neglect of a husband! Ah, where should I find teeth so beautifully white, such glossy hair, piercing eyes, and eyebrows exquisitely arch-

ed?

ed? The gods cannot have created thee to be unhappy, unless they take delight in the sufferings of beauty.

I shall see thee, I shall embrace thee, mingle my soul with thine, and promise to love thee eternally, and even to madness.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

GLAZIR to ZATOR.

WE are awkwardly situated with regard to each other, and this awkwardness arises from the variation of our clocks. What art thou doing at this moment, while the sun is rising here in all its splendour? It may be said that, every night, he charges Aurora to announce his appearance, with great pomp, as one on whom the seasons, the plants, in short, the whole universe is dependent. The news thou hast sent us from Paris has already become public, and has given double satisfaction to various families, because it recalled the idea of thy amiable person. Nor has it escaped Typoo Saib himself, who, as I am told, wishes to read

read thy travels. Thou writest only concerning fashions, customs, and manners, and thou dost perfectly right. I was much afflicted yesterday with an account of a countryman of ours, who went to France about eleven years ago, and was murdered for the sake of his gold and diamonds. No people are more adroit than sharpers. Their turns, shifts, and windings are so numerous, that even those that are robbed by them cannot refrain from laughter. It is said there are houses where they serve regular apprenticeships to this pernicious trade. Our countryman indeed was grossly covetous; and a miser generally makes an unfortunate exit. The sins of a sordid man must of course be augmented, the moment he goes to Paris, which is undoubtedly an expensive and extravagant city.

LETTER

LETTER XXX.

TO GLAZIR.

THE reception of our ambassadors at court, hath become a brilliant epocha. The entertainment was costly and magnificent, and, had it been embellished with Asiatic luxury, it could not have been celebrated with greater splendour.

On the tenth day of August, 1788, about half past eleven o'clock in the forenoon, in the middle of an immense gallery, ornamented with carved work, looking-glasses, and paintings, amidst two rows of beautiful women, and well dressed courtiers, appeared *Mahomed Burvish*, *Achur Aly*, and *Mahomed Ottchn*, marching with slow and solemn steps upon the richest carpets, and advancing with dignity

nity to the throne of the monarch, who darted glittering beams around him, and received additional lustre from the presence of the queen and royal family. They bowed: the monarch did the same: they spoke:—he replied. The most profound silence and attentive regards announced the importance of the interview, but the spectacle was still more gratifying to the imagination, which exhibited India and France uniting together by means of a treaty.

The audience being finished, the gardens were filled with all that was brilliant in Paris; and this gay procession assumed an air of festivity that reflected the greatest lustre upon our Indians. They were followed through the walks, and loaded with praises, insomuch that they had great difficulty to keep themselves free from pride. The name of *Typoo Saib* was frequently mentioned, and thou wouldst have heard the shouts that followed if their sounds could have vibrated across the ocean. I was much delighted, I confess;

less; for, in spite of my philosophy, I am not insensible to the praises that are lavished on my country. As to those that are bestowed on my person, they are, to me, totally indifferent.

Our ambassadors quitted *Versailles* for the purpose of going to *Trianon*, a delicious spot, where the sovereign spends several months in the year, augmenting its advantages and allurements, by such natural graces as attract all eyes.

I returned, in the evening to Paris, charmed with having seen the residence of the French king, which, if Heaven permit, I will cherish in my memory even in my old days.

LETTER

LETTER XXXI.

TO GLAZIR.

I WAS seated in a solitary thicket, when two strangers, who were walking at no great distance, began to dispute with much warmth respecting the actual pre-eminence of the French or Italians, with regard to the fine arts. The Italian insisted that Italy was not at all degenerated from its former splendour, being still able to boast of great painters and statuaries. The Frenchman supported a contrary opinion, and gave the preference to his own country. He mentioned several celebrated artists of both professions: the Italian mentioned none. They quickly perceived, and appealed to me as the judge of their controversy.

Alas,

Alas, said I, how will you be able to depend upon the decision of a poor Indian, who can hardly lisp the language of artists, much less determine their respective merits and taste? Indian! they both exclaimed, with surprise,—yours indeed is not a studious land, but it is a land of imagination; and doubtless an historian from India, sensibly struck with the features of an European country, would produce a wonderful historic picture. Their enthusiasm increased to such a degree that they conjured me to imprint on the mind of some young Indian, a taste for the liberal arts, and afterwards to persuade *Typoo Saib* to send him over to Europe.

Their quarrel was, afterwards, warmly renewed, but they at length agreed that Rome derived all her glory from times long past: that she would always be a grand repository to which artists would repair from all parts of the earth, to sketch designs and select models; but that she, at present, possessed neither a *Raphael* nor a *Michael Angelo*. The

The Italian grew warm and animated. He referred to the mausoleum of a pope named Clement, which is said to be a master-piece, fresh from the hands of a young Venetian. This monument, said he, which is preferable to all the statues that have been sculptured in Paris for these last fifteen years, is a sufficient proof of the superiority of our workmanship.

Such noble emulation pleased me infinitely. I would give all the world to see it prevalent in my own country. Who knows if India will not become, at some future day, a second Europe, as to arts and talents? Could it ever have been believed that Paris would take place of Athens, and that in Russia, a celebrated city would be erected, in which the sciences would fix their habitations? But we should swear to nothing.

If I have been dreaming all this while, I am fond of such dreams.

I resign

I resign thy days into the hands of our great prophet, that they may be cloudless and undarkened by the exhalations of vice: and that thou mayest be able to say, after a long and happy life, "I have been a pattern of righteousness, and have lived only to do good."

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X I I .

TO GLAZIER.

THOU wishest me to determine thy doubts respecting Europe, and to tell thee, by way of abridgment, in what plight she actually finds herself, under the different princes by whom she is governed. She is a rich lady who is endued with wit, and gifted with every natural grace, but who often paints, and is too fond of appearing in public. Her right arm, the emblem of France, is equally handsome and robust; but instead of being strengthened by employment, it is kept delicately white, in order to appear the more alluring.

The fovereigns that maintain the lustre
of Europe are divided into emperors,
G kings,

kings, doges, and stadtholders. Each of these sovereigns hath his interests, his prejudices; and if he had them not, his ministers would have them in his stead.

The first is the king of France, who governs the finest country, as to situation, riches, and the manner in which all parties are united. He enjoys an immense revenue, which, however, is frequently diminished by male-administrations.

The emperor, king of Bohemia and Hungary, who is now at war with the Turks, which is the more wonderful, as he has but little money; and his troops, amounting nearly to three hundred thousand men, must necessarily cost him immense sums.

The empress of Russia, magnificent even in the moment of scarcity, endeavouring to hold the sovereignty of the Crimea, and exhausting herself hourly, in hopes of carrying on the war at the expence of the Ottomans.

The

The sultan, obliged to employ all his forces against two formidable enemies whom he fatigues and harasses with skirmishes, fearful lest a pitched battle should prove fatal to his cause.

The king of Poland, who would have revived the story of John Sobieski, had he not forfeited the affections of his people by surrendering himself to Russia.

The king of Sweden, a prince as brave as he is skilful: the leader also of a valourous nation, who sallies forth to meet glory, and makes her his ally.

The king of Denmark, who joins together all advantages, and takes the side that most accords with his interest.

The Spanish monarch, notorious for his good sense;—he governs wisely, takes his measures slowly, but supports them with admirable resolution after they are taken.

The king of Naples, ready to follow the impulse of those powers with which he is in alliance.

The queen of Portugal, who doubles her strength by means of her wisdom.

The Pope, whose dominions offer nothing but lands without culture; nor can they ever be well managed, on account of the inexperience and old age of the pontiffs that are elected to govern them.

The king of Sardinia, whose wisdom on one side, and inaccessible mountains on the other, are the supporters of peace, which is the best expedient to procure abundance, and to render the people happy.

The doges of Genoa and Venice, chiefs of two timorous republics, that owe their existence only to their situation.

The king of England, who actually finds fewer resources in the treasures of his subjects than in their energy; but who is afraid, at present, to engage in a war with his neighbours, lest he should fall a victim to his rashness.

The stadtholder of Holland, assailed by tumults and seditions in the midst of a
republic

republic that scarcely exists between slavery and liberty.

Such is the situation of this vast and civilized religion, whose customs we should have adopted, had we not been removed from it to such an immense distance. The liberty that is respired is the vehicle of its grandeur!—I shall but whisper this last truth into thy ear when I return; but here we are accustomed to speak boldly. Frenchmen, who are naturally great chatterers, must have employment for their tongues; and yet it is well known that he who speaks most vehemently against the government, would open a vein, on the spot, if his king had occasion for his blood. It is this that makes the spies that are scattered through Paris, much less formidable than at Venice. Adieu——

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

T O G L A Z I R .

THE societies of Paris are diversified according to the different quarters. Here they are noisy and obstreperous, there languid and monotonous. Those that abound with gown-men are said to be pedantic, those that are frequented by courtiers, fastidious. I have already been introduced to many of these communities, and am dissatisfied with almost all I have seen. They discuss no subjects but what I am unacquainted with, they talk only of persons whom I shall never see. Their conversation frequently turns upon the baptism of a young marchioness, or the marriage of an old countess; and always upon petty events that one moment brings
upon

upon the carpet, and the next annihilates.

The great visit each other out of mere ceremony, and order their carriages to be driven like the wind, at the risk of laming foot passengers, and killing their horses, merely that they may relate, as a most important piece of news, that it has rained all day long, or that it is fair weather. The first week of my arrival I imagined that the personages who drove so furiously through the streets, were hastening to set some prisoner at liberty, or to save the life of some miserable mortal. I was taken for an idiot, entirely unacquainted with the polite world, and at length understood that nobody travelled quicker in Paris than those who had nothing to do. Scarcely was I presented at the house of a financier, where there was a large company, before every one began to examine me very strictly, and each, addressing his neighbour, asked whence I came, what was my name, and when I intended to depart. I overheard all this discourse,
and

and was of opinion that curiosity might have remitted these questions to a future day. But I was informed that French vivacity did not admit of such delays, which were consistent only with the genius of a Dutchman, who seldom gives his answer till several days after a question has been referred to him. Gaming is here more temperate than might be imagined. Except at several tennis-courts, tolerated at Paris, there is no ruinous play.

It is incredible with what an easy air a man of fashion addresses himself to a woman of quality. He attends her toilet in the most slovenly dress, for which he makes no apology but a bow or a caper, declaring that he is a warm admirer of English customs. Were our countrymen to visit Paris for a hundred years successively, I fear they would never be able to introduce the fashions of India. We have nevertheless our petits-mâîtres who are fond of appearing to be whimsical, and would rather die than part with their singularities.

gularities. It is with these as with a pretty woman with whom I lately entered into conversation, at a public assembly. " I love my husband, said she, merely because I would be singular. Were it the fashion for man and wife to live happily together, I should absolutely hate him. I have no pleasure but in being original, and this lesson I learnt from my mother, who could not endure me because her neighbours loved their children. Her life was a deviation from common practice, and her will perfectly unique. I will be myself, said she, and not another."

The post is going, I have therefore only time to tell thee that Paris is to me most insupportable, when I think of the great distance at which it places us from each other.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO SOLIMA.

I HAD, last night, a presentiment that I should shortly learn some tidings respecting thee, and this morning I received a letter written with thy own hand. I pressed the precious signature to my lips, and my heart leaped for joy.

I am happy to find that my slaves hearken to thy precepts as if they came from my lips, and that they take delight in serving thee faithfully. The religion by which they are inspired contributes to this end. An opinion, however, that is not admitted by many arrogant spirits that are found in Paris. They are desirous of being their own god, imagining there is no other, and that this immense universe has always existed. In short,
my

my dear Solima, they rob the supreme Being of his essence, and bestow his divine qualities upon wood, stones, sand, insects, reptiles, and other insensible things of which nature is composed.

The Alcoran condemns all who adore not the eternal; and that eternal will himself condemn them beyond all redemption. Let my children, I conjure thee, feed incessantly upon that divine morality which occasions the happiness of families, and the peace of nations.

Be particularly attentive to the education of my niece, for she has much need of counsel. I am acquainted with her admirer, who is endued with good sense, a quality far superior to wit. He likewise possesses an excellent heart, which I esteem beyond riches. He is said to be no talker—Alas! so much the better; his lips will be the seal of circumspection. He had an earnest desire to be the companion of my travels, but he was unhappily born without a taste for the sciences, which is indispensably necessary to all
who

who travel for improvement. Besides he is naturally idle, and he who traverses the world has occasion for activity. I shall reserve my promised discription of the charms of Paris till my return. The French method of building and lodging will appear so different from ours, that thou wilt suppose me to be just returned from that new world which we are to visit after death.

Kiss the Alcoran on my account, and be persuaded that my heart has not been wounded by those females of all complexions that I see in this city. Nerisa has written to me a most furious letter. May heaven forgive her! As for myself I can easily pardon a wife that is vicious only through excess of love.

LETTER

LETTER XXXV.

TO GLAZIR.

I WAS in the midst of a numerous family when the son arrived from college, where he had been confined from the age of five years. He was now fifteen, and his father, who had not seen him since he was a child, desired me, for a moment, to be his representative. I performed my part with such success that the young scholar sprang forward, caught me round the neck, called me his papa, and discovered a thousand proofs of his affection. It is the blood within you that speaks, said somebody to him, and he strongly believed the assertion. Even when he was informed of the pleasantry, and when the real father declared himself he rejected him, and remaining still attached

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ed to me, paid no regard to the man from whom he had received his being.

After such an adventure I will not believe that children, so early removed from the paternal dwelling, can entertain a proper affection for their parents. They contract a habit of neglect that continues through life. Doth not thy heart revolt from such a ridiculous custom? To have children, and never to see them is the same thing as to have no children at all. Mothers, here, cannot endure their daughters when they begin to be women, and fathers send away their sons because, in their presence, they cannot give a loose to their accustomed licentiousness. Thus on all hands love subsists only in appearance. This, however, is not the only inconvenience that results from so silly a practice.

At the end of three years, the presumptive heir of a distinguished family, —who had been exiled to the cottage of a nurse that lived at a considerable distance, and had not been seen since the
moment

moment of his birth,—was brought back to his parents. He was eagerly caressed, and it was found that his features bore a striking resemblance to those of his father and mother. A hundred visitors came every day to embrace him, and to repeat this agreeable truth, till it was at length found out that the dear creature was a supposititious child, and that the genuine heir presumptive had been dead for more than seven months.

Such mistakes are unhappily but too frequent. A fine lady would fall into a swoon if her lap-dog were to be stolen; but the loss of a child would be less distressing to her than the loss of a piece of muslin, or the privation of a new play.

Children follow the footsteps of their parents.—Scarce are they arrived at their teens before they are desirous of becoming their own masters, and of being able to squander their fortunes without countrol. Nothing can be more agreeable, said one of these young men, than

to

to see one's whole kindred annihilated, and to have the pleasure of saying, "My late father, my late brother, my late uncle, my late sister, my late family." Such are the dispositions we form when we see our children but once a year, and even then take pains to quarrel with them. Every thing relative to education is carried to the extreme, in France. Either an indecent familiarity or the most rigid indifference takes place between the father and the son. Thy soul would shrink back at the sight of such disorders. A parent ought incessantly to renew his existence in the hearts of his children, by an assiduity to see them, to follow their wanderings, to communicate to them his views, his tastes, his inclinations, and his virtues—provided that he has any, for this does not always follow. The paternal dwelling would then attract imitation. Should it, however, continue to resemble the houses I have already seen, the greater part of which are filled with corrupt prints, and pernicious publications, it will be impossible to keep children at home,

home, and at the same time preserve them from vice. Here you meet with an unnatural mother that cannot abide the sight of her daughter; there a coquet that has legions of lovers; here a father who consumes whole nights at the gaming table; there an atheist who blasphemes without cessation. What a fine pattern of imitation!—I shudder at the idea!

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

TO GLAZIR.

A GENTLEMAN possessed with the evil spirit of *book-gathering*,—for there are in this country, men of letters who buy books upon books, and who are regardless of price when they meet with a rare publication,—accidentally met with a work written in a language absolutely unknown. He assembled the academicians, and most learned men that were to be found in Paris, but not one of them could understand the idiom of this new tongue. The book consequently passes for a treasure. It is guarded as a relic, and every stranger that arrives is invited to see the precious volume. While every body was at a loss, and each reasoned

soned in his own way respecting such a phenomenon, a farmer arrived from the inward recesses of Brittany. He waited upon our amateur to settle some matters relative to his estates in that province, and observing the book in his hand, exclaimed "I would never have believed that a gentleman, like your honour, could have found any amusement in the reading of such idle matter." What do you mean? cried the amateur, hastily. "That it is a book that contains nothing but silly and nonsensical tales, written in the language of lower Brittany, and which originally cost but three pence!"

Is it possible? cried the scholar, extremely mortified.

"I will convince you of my assertion in a moment, replied the countryman, by reading it from one end to the other."

This history has afforded much amusement to the Parisians, and it will serve to convince thee that men's extravagancies often throw them into the most ridiculous

culous situations; and that enthusiasts are always divested of reason. Blunders and frauds have been common to books ever since the invention of printing.—The most learned are deceived in this respect, when they are not upon their guard. It is the same with pictures, which are sold even to connoisseurs for originals, but are at length found to be only copies. How blind is enthusiasm!

A nobleman builds a library for the same purpose as he builds a green-house, that is to say, he never enters its doors. He sends for a bookseller and desires him to furnish it with the newest publications, at a wholesale price. The books are sent, and the bookseller is obliged to give credit, because he has sold them to a lord.

I have not yet spoken to thee of those women of the town whom libertinism, and not love, attaches to a most dreadful profession. They are numerous as the locusts in our Indian fields, and, like them,
feed

feed upon every thing that they are able to devour. Instead of being confined to a particular quarter, as in Rome, Amsterdam, and many other places, they are suffered to range at liberty: and so licentious is their behaviour that they stop almost every passenger whom they meet. Their attempts, however, are not always crowned with success. The man without money, the sick and the disappointed man, the man of austere manners, and the man of business, do not readily listen to their enticements, but are more ready to beat than to follow them. The shameful liberty they enjoy is indeed repaid with interest. Delivered up to the despotism of the *gouvernesses* who lodge and board them, to the caprice of sentinels, who arrest and throw them into prison, to the brutality of their employers, who treat them with every indignity, in short, having no prospect before them but the horrors of an hospital, they lead a life the most deplorable

able that can be well imagined. There is not one of them who does not curse her fate, and who would not quit her profession if a habit of idleness did not counteract her desires.

Their unbridled licentiousness would act as an antidote to love, if passion were gifted with reason. Those who are only half-libertines are inspired with horror at such licentiousness, the victims of which are principally young men without experience, and aged sinners, whose system is to die in the bosom of debauchery.

Perhaps it would be no difficult matter to recal these females to the paths of virtue, especially if we were to treat them indulgently. Take the following as an instance:—A duchess, coming out of church, attempted to convert one of these unhappy girls, by offering her some lustral water, which the christians call holy water. The interdicted wretch started backwards and exclaimed, “Alas! madam, you do not know me.”—After
a few

a few words had passed, she was desired to repair to the hotel of the duchess.— She obeyed the summons, overwhelmed with tears, nor could the lady herself refrain from weeping. Her conversion was the consequence of the interview. She became at length a model of prudence, and it was found out that she was a young lady of condition, the daughter of a captain in the army. An officer had run away with her when she was but fourteen years old, and having squandered all his money, had left her to take methods for her own safety; necessity became her tyrant, and she lived in debauchery because she could not live in any other way. The duchess, a few years afterwards, gave her a portion, and procured her a husband; and I have been assured that she is at this moment a most excellent mother of a family; that she loves her husband, and educates her children in all the principles of religion.

There are houses in Paris founded for these unhappy victims of libertinism, and they

they are by no means the worst establishments. Gentleness is always the most efficacious corrector.

Thus I have told thee good things as well as bad; for both the one and the other contribute to the instruction of a wise man. The most salutary medicines are extracted from poisons. Adieu—

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII

GLAZIR to ZATOR.

I RECEIVE my instructions from afar, and they are more dear to me when I recollect that they have travelled from Paris to the Indies. It hath been said that I have not taken the shortest road, I have nevertheless chosen that which is most pleasing to my heart, and most useful to my intellectual powers. I shall have gone through a course of studies in the capital of France, without ever having been within its walls. I class thy letters in a regular disposition as I ought to receive them, not according to their arrival; for the winds will not subject themselves to chronological order. They often bring me old dates before new.

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I am overwhelmed with my wives as soon as I receive thy epistles, and so eager are they to profit from thy pleasing information, that our correspondence becomes general. The Indian is not born, any more than the Parisian, to continue in a state of ignorance. He has a right to gain advantage from useful discoveries as well as other nations, and if he has so long continued a barbarian, it is not his fault, but the fault of the situation and climate in which he is placed.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO GLAZIR.

AN agreeable circumstance brought me into conversation with one of those amphibious beings that are called commendatory abbes, who often receive a hundred thousand livres yearly, as a recompense for serving neither church nor state. In a word, they may be called *honourable unserviceables*, except when they throw part of their fortunes into the bosom of an indigent family, which is seldom the case.

The abbe of whom I am speaking, although gaudy as the butterfly, fresh as spring, and light as a zephyr, had resolution enough to stay with me two entire hours. Without doubt, he was pleased

with the singularity of a conversation with an Indian.

“I am, said the abbe, with admirable candour, the cadet of an ancient family. Gifted neither with science nor conduct, I am provided with a title, by which I am authorised to make my heart merry, and to open my purse freely. All this, however, does not keep me ignorant of the pernicious tendency of my profession, nor does it prevent me from thinking that the forty thousand crowns which I receive at the end of every year, would give happiness to an hundred individuals whose existence is a thousand times more necessary than mine. I laugh, for instance, whenever we are called the first order of the state; we, who, according to our evangelical institution, ought to know no order but the order of humility; we, to whom the supreme law-giver has formally declared that it should not be with us as with the princes of nations; that we should govern no one with insolence; that we should never

ver assume the title of master; that we should possess neither gold nor silver; but that we ought to content ourselves with a staff in our hands, and the little contributions of the charitable."

But the sovereigns of the earth, said I, have accorded these prerogatives to the clergy, out of respect to religion.

"Then, sir, their respect has been wrongly applied. Religion is never more venerable than when her ministers are as poor as the Messiah, who had nowhere to lay his head, as he himself informs us. Formerly they were not allowed to accept of honours, but were compelled to adhere literally to the title which is given to the Pope, the only title indeed that strictly belongs to him—*The servant of servants*. Who can refrain from laughter, when he arrives at Rome, to see that very man served in the most magnificent manner, and in the bosom of the most splendid pomp, who ought to serve all the world! I have visited Italy, and have always been of opinion

opinion that strangers who kiss the toe of his holiness, have a better claim to the appellation of *servants of servants*, than he who is attended by domestics of all denominations, habited in gold lace."

I could not refrain from hinting to the abbe that I should not have suspected him of speaking so strongly against the interests of the clergy.

"Against their interests? quite the contrary, he replied:—a regard for their real welfare and true glory has induced me to advance these opinions. The clergy will never be more formidable or better respected than when they shall possess no patrimony but that of the apostles, who lived upon charity, and the labour of their hands;—than when they shall cease to interfere in secular affairs, and banish themselves from every assembly where interest is, in the least, concerned."

If this be the case, said I, you ought to quit your abbey, procure a linen habit, and live like a saint.

"Truly

“ Truly I should do much better than at present,——but, in the mean while, I preach the truth, and that is always something. I have an uncle, a bishop, who is a good man, but who abhors me when I support my favourite thesis. He imagines that temporal possessions are attached to religion, and that it is his duty to permit his throat to be cut rather than suffer it to utter a contrary opinion. Yet Jesus Christ has said, “ If a man demands your coat, give him your cloak also.”

At least, said I, you make a good use of your income?

“ Nothing very extraordinary.—Although convinced that I am doing wrong, I permit myself to be led away; and really, with my hair dressed and powdered in all the elegance of the fashion, my reasons have more weight than if I were meanly clothed. In the latter case it would be said that I was an idiot whose brain had been turned by devotion:—at present my auditors exclaim “ What
he

he says must certainly be true, since he is forced to make confessions so incompatible with his conduct." As to the rest, here I am, and like the Jansenists, I wait for prevailing grace for the purpose of being converted."

The abbé paid me many compliments respecting our ambassadors, whom he had visited, and our nation, which he appeared to hold in great esteem. From the answers I gave him, he observed that I had read other books besides the Alcoran.

I returned to a company that I had left at the game of billiards. Each was giving his opinion upon an event of which almost all present had been eye-witnesses, but there were not two of these opinions alike. One denied what another affirmed.—A man disposed to bet against those who pretend to have witnessed facts, would here win many wagers. Hence you may judge of the truth of history. Falsehood will always be heaped upon falsehood,—except when I make a declaration of unchangeable friendship.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

TO GLAZIR.

I HAVE just left a spectacle by which I have been so much affected that my heart still beats high!—Imagine to yourself immense courts and halls, an innumerable crowd of people of all ages and conditions, clapping of hands and stamping of feet, shouts of joy, a flux and reflux of spectators pressing and pressed; —and in the midst of all this tumult, formed by rapture and sentiment, magistrates, dukes, peers, and prelates, penetrating to the sanctuary of justice, and surrounded with acclamations. The parliament returned, while the noise of fifes and drums, and the cries of “long live the fathers of their country,” resounded

through all the palace. The people shook hands and embraced, as if it had been at the conclusion of a civil war.

It was indeed time that such a celebration should arrive. The people, driven almost to madness by a total cessation of justice for the last five months, were prepared for the commission of every excess. They were pacified only by placing their confidence in the bounty of the king, who loves a good action from the bottom of his soul, and always redresses wrongs, the very moment he is acquainted with them. Were it possible, the ministers of a sovereign ought to descend from the skies; they would then be without family, without interest, without passions, in a word, without every thing that debases men in place, and renders them the objects of public indignation. We have been overflowed with satires upon this subject for these three months past, but as by good fortune I have never perused any of them, I cannot speak as to their merits. Even gold is given for stanzas,
burlesque

burlesque comedies, memoirs, and songs, that are all forgotten in less than a month. Poetry is more capable of admitting all possible forms and shapes, especially on mischievous subjects, than any other species of composition. When themes are given out, poets and verses spring up from all parts, and every man you meet produces an epigram, or a satire, which is rendered supportable only by being well timed. Thou findest that I talk to thee upon this subject as upon many others, merely from what I have heard. What am I but a poor wanderer, a savage, born at the distance of 6000 leagues from this city? I am only the echo of other men's opinions. Thus much, however, is certain—there is not a young man in Paris who does not make verses, and he would be unreasonable indeed that should expect such trifles to be equal with the works of a master. Besides, they are only intended for the amusement of a moment; and, like a nosegay

nosegay that is given as a present, they generally die with the day of festivity.

We Indians should find it difficult to invent these little nothings. Our language and climate are incompatible with such a species of writing. French poetry, said an Italian to me, a few days ago, is like those little flower-borders that surround magnificent plantations. I wish nevertheless that I were an adept in it : then could I tell thee, with all the gaiety of a Parisian, how truly I am thy friend.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

TO GLAZIR.

TWO Englishmen,—having been informed by three Frenchmen, just returned from London, that they had visited Cambridge and York, but had set fire to Oxford,—burst into a violent rage.—“How, Oxford! they cried, is that once superb university no more than a heap of ruins? and have you the audacity to boast to us of your detestable exploit. Choose, instantly, swords or pistols; for, by all that is sacred, we will wash the affront in your blood.” In vain they were told that the word *brûler*, which the Frenchmen had made use of, signified in one of its

its

its acceptations *to consume with fire*, yet in the present instance, it meant simply *not to enter a town*. Being entirely ignorant of such language, they drew their swords and threw themselves into an attitude of defence. In such a situation, the Frenchmen could not remain inactive. Both parties began to trust with the utmost vehemence; and after a long struggle, three of the combatants fell dead upon the spot.

Thus a fatal tragedy was produced by the equivocal meaning of a single word.

Our lives are always sufficiently uncertain, and if we *must* fight, we should, at least, know upon what occasion. A man's days are so few that, from his birth, he ought to understand all languages by intuition. Our ignorance in this respect almost proves to me that we were not designed for travellers; and that, if a man be willing to live happily, he must continue fixed to his native soil. Of course I condemn myself, for mine is but a borrowed existence. When I am in my native

tive country, I am almost enabled to call the sky, the stars, the sun, my own; on the contrary, in a strange land, even the light by which I am directed, appears not to belong to me: hence we give the preference to our household gods.

The more I travel, the greater is my love to my country. Oh what delight shall I take in surveying the spot where I passed my earliest days! Even in the tears that I shall shed over the tombs of my ancestors, I shall find a pleasing satisfaction. It will seem to me as if they were but half-deceased, whereas, now I am deprived of the happiness of kissing their ashes, they appear to be annihilated. The trees, the rocks, the mountains, formerly the witnesses of our converse, recur to my imagination during sleep, and I vainly think I am once more in the midst of those charming scenes.

Go,——visit them in my behalf, and if all nature be endued with sentiment, as some philosophers have asserted, they will be sensible of this mark of my remembrance. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER XLI.

GLAZIR TO ZATOR.

ONE of my wives hath lately produced me a daughter, beautiful as a sunbeam. Her eyes are the eyes of innocence, her gestures the expression of sentiment, her breath the perfume of roses. It would be impossible for me to number the kisses that my mouth hath lavished upon her. Little being, said I, in the transports of the most ardent love, pressing her at the same time within my arms,—what are the decrees of the Eternal with respect to thy destiny? Wilt thou not live beyond the age of a flower, or will thy career be as long as that of thy forefathers? Wilt thou marry a husband worthy to possess thee?—In short, wilt thou live in a state of misery, or exist only for the purpose of enjoying happiness? Thou art come into a world that is sown with sorrows, and inhabitest a body subject to every misfortune!

fortune ! O ! tender object of my affections, mayest thou, every year, increase in stature, so shalt thou secure my felicity, and thy own perfection. May thy little hands never be stretched forth, but to scatter liberalities ; may thy eyelids never be lifted but to view good examples ; and may thy heart be desirous of no wealth but that which passeth not away !—I mingle my existence with thine. If thou livest, I live ; if thou diest, I expire. Alas !—

The mother of this charming infant has embraced and sprinkled it with tears of tenderness and joy, for it is the first pledge of our love. If I could send it to thee in a letter, and have it returned by the same conveyance, and were it possible for that letter to travel with the swiftness of a bird that cuts the air with its wings, I would part with it, for a moment, that it might participate in thy embraces. But, alas ! these wishes are fruitless.

News ! news !—I languish for news.

LETTER

LETTER XLII.

TO GLAZIR.

SALAMALEC to thy daughter,—
that new production of nature, who hath
augmented the number of mortals, and
is come to exist on this earth, under the
care of an admirable Providence that
watcheth over all mankind.

If she had been born at Paris, I could
have drawn her horoscope. Notwith-
standing the variety of tastes, characters,
fortunes, and passions, by which human
nature is influenced, I could have pre-
dicted that she would be fond of finery,
that she would dress her hair in a singu-
lar manner, that she would affect coquet-
tish airs, that she would often visit the
Palais-Royal, that she would attract ad-
mirers,

mirers, and lastly, that she would love a ball-room better than a church.

An excellent woman, with whom I am absolutely in love, although she has seen eighty years—for women, here, never grow old—has bestowed upon me many marks of her friendship. We often converse together, and she has really a wonderful memory, having read a great deal, and forgotten nothing. “ Behold, said she, shewing me her great granddaughter, behold a little wretch who would, one day, break the hearts of her parents if they were wise; but, as they will be greater fools than she, they will suffer her to follow her own inclinations, and there is no extravagance that she will not commit, in order to retain her place on the list of gallantry. They will be pleased with her follies, and sorry only when she does a reasonable act.

“ I am often amused by her flights, she continued, but I take care to hold her reason and honour in leading-strings:—were these to ramble for a moment, I would

would procure a cord. When I was a girl, I often received a box on the ear because my head and eyes swang backwards and forwards like those of a Mandarin on a chimney-piece. But *she* contents herself with no such movement. She would fly, if it were possible—to a promenade I will say no more. Virtue once escaped is not easily recovered. Pity it is that some neighbouring nation does not undertake the education of our children. But which of them is equal to such a task? I know not. This, however, I know, that in being nursed half naked, according to the English fashion, they are accustomed to immodesty. Such an effect indeed was neither intended nor foreseen, but we often commit wrong in attempting to do right.”

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

PALMYRA, NERISA, and SOLIMA, to ZATOR.

THY three wives write to thee jointly, to evince their unanimity, and express with one accord, the ardour of their love. When will thy lips, more beautiful than coral, be rivetted to ours? When will thy mutual embraces fulfil our desires?

The other day we walked under the palm-tree. The birds that sat upon its branches mixed their songs with ours, and its pleasant liquor moistened our lips with its vivifying flavour. No—the wine that is drunk by the christians was never so rich as the nectar that we drank together. Tears of joy were mingled with it, and we sipped down felicity by turns. Thou wouldst have been astonished at our silence, which was interrupted only when we talked of thee. We expect a recital of a thousand curious things when we get thee into our possession;

tion ; for thou wilt make us acquainted with the customs of French-women, which are so often the subjects of conversation ; and instruct us in their method of walking, dancing, and living. Are they guided by love, or caprice ? Do they adore their husbands ? Are they adored in return ? It is said that they are not, like us, held in captivity ; that they are suffered to range at pleasure. At least this is the account that is given in an old book which hath been translated into Arabic, and which treats of their established manners. Are they as handsome as we ? Do they bathe themselves as often ?——What a multitude of questions ! But how wilt thou find time to answer them ? thou that readest without intermission, that walkest in the same manner, and that smokest thy pipe whilst engaged in meditation.

Ah ! that this letter could be put into thy hands by the angel that carries the messages of heaven——It is a testimony of our fidelity. Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER XLIV.

ZATOR TO SOLIMA.

THE heavens open to me every time I receive thy letters. Not even the treasures of the East, immense as they are, affect my soul like a single word written with thy hand. Every time I lament our cruel absence I descend into my own heart, and there I am sure of finding thee. It is there that I have made a bed of repose for my Solima, it is there that she is cherished. Thou complainest of my travels, but ought we not to lay by a store of knowledge for our mutual subsistence when we shall be once more united? I will relate to thee all I have seen, and thou wilt be interested in the narrative. Wilt thou not be pleased when I tell thee that Paris

is,

is, of itself, a world, and wilt thou not rejoice when I undertake to analyze that world, in order to instruct thee as to its tastes, its pleasures, its follies, its adventures, its vices, its virtues? when I inform thee of the ridiculous marriages that are there celebrated, the silly books that are composed, the singular comedies that are performed? when I give thee a just idea of the method in which youth are educated, of the fashions that change every hour, of the whims that are continually springing up, to their own ruin and the ruin of others? These histories, whose sources are inexhaustible, will be tragic as well as comic; sometimes they will excite thy tears, and sometimes thy smiles. I will instruct thee in events which are at present unknown through the vast track of India. So extraordinary will my narratives appear, that thou wilt believe them to be either dreams or fables; and yet I swear before-hand, by the holy Alcoran, that they are founded in truth. No people can create pleasant adventures

ventures so well as the French. None but they can sing in the bosom of misfortune, and almost render sorrow agreeable;—none but they can make even their faults appear amiable.

When Heaven shall be pleased to unite us, I shall have an incredible number of stories to relate and to read to thee. Without them what would be our conversation? The charms of familiar discourse are not possessed by Indians that have neither trafficked nor travelled.

May you all be united in peace, and may there be among you but one heart, one soul, and one mind. Make the slaves tremble, by telling them that I shall be terrible at my return if they dare to slight your commands.—Adieu—I am going to read a new book, which is said to be profoundly written.

I LETTER

LETTER XLV.

TO GLAZIR.

FRANCE is actually in a most alarming crisis with regard to ready money; and this is often the case with the most flourishing empires. Relying too much upon their strength, they find themselves insensibly overwhelmed with debt. But where there are immense possessions, there are great resources; and I have thought of one in particular, by means of which I could procure a seat among the ministry, if I were addicted to enterprize. I communicated it, lately, to a financier—"It is beyond a doubt, Monsieur, said I, that among twenty four millions of inhabitants, the kingdom contains at least three hundred

dred thousand misers. The greater part of these do not spend one eighth part of their income ; by seizing, therefore, what they keep in reserve, you would neither diminish their subsistence, nor alter their manner of living. I would have an exact list taken of these singular men, who should be classed agreeably to their wealth, which might be ascertained without much difficulty. A person, for instance, whose revenue is four score thousand livres, and who spends but six thousand, should retain the latter sum, and be obliged to forget the remainder. His heirs would not be injured, because the principal would still remain untouched."

By means of this plan, a considerable sum might be collected, which would come opportunely enough to the relief of the state. It is hardly credible how avarice is increased, and to what an excess it is carried. I have been assured that a man exceedingly rich, who occupied apartments in the house of a tradesman, with whom he lived in habits of friendship,

descended, every morning, into the kitchen, under colour of speaking to the cook; but no sooner was his back turned than, with a syringe which he had ordered to be made in the form of a walking-cane, he dexterously stole a sufficient quantity of soup for his breakfast, which he always ate in private.

Ecclesiastics are particularly attached to this sordid vice: as if God were inclined to punish them for holding benefices against his will. Let us return thanks to our prophet for preserving us from this dreadful wickedness. If men really understood their own interests, both with respect to this world and the next, they would exercise themselves in acts of beneficence. The very virtues of the avaricious man are held in derision, while the vices of him who gives with a smiling countenance, are excused. If the great really wish to follow their own inclinations with impunity, said a wise man, a few days ago, let them scatter liberalities.

A woman

A woman lately died in this city who had been a beggar all her life-time. She had desired with much earnestness that she might be interred in a tattered dress which she particularised, and which, on being produced was found to be exceedingly weighty. It was examined, unfused, in short—it was lined with gold!

The unhappy wretch had indulged a wish that her money might accompany her to her coffin; and, what was still more shocking, she had been ranked among the poor, and had eaten of their bread.

I have not strength to tell thee more. My heart trembles at the idea,—my senses are frozen! Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

TO GLAZIR.

THOU askest me what is that which is called at Paris *L'esprit du jour*. To satisfy thee is no difficult matter. It is a sort of wit that attempts to brighten ideas, and which, like a will o' the wisp, glances upon things almost without touching them; or rather, it is like those sparks that dazzle for a moment and then disperse, leaving no track behind.

Some authors have compared it to the spray of the sea, which rises in the air, and falls in a manner almost imperceptible. Others have likened it to the flight of a butterfly, that ranges from flower to flower,

flower, without adhering to the one or the other. This wit is the scourge of learned men, and the torment of society. It has no tendency to serious matters. Should it attempt to discuss, it touches them but slightly, or gets clear of them by a pun which is substituted for argument. It is pleased with fashionable conversations, particularly among the ladies; because it can amuse them with trifles and flattery. Having no foundation it is soon exhausted, but it has the art of repeating the same thing, so as to make it appear different. In the morning it is employed in filching thoughts from ingenious books; and these very thoughts it appropriates to itself in the afternoon. It is called *L'esprit du jour* because it changes according to the fashions,—in short, it is a weather-cock that turns with every wind.

A pleasant author lately made a dialogue between Good Sense and *L'esprit du jour*, in which they strenuously contended for their respective rights. It was
dedicated

dedicated to a countess, who, when the work was presented to her, tore it into a thousand pieces. " Good sense, said she, rendered the society of my father and mother so heavy and melancholy that they both died without ever having laughed. This was the more to be lamented because we are not sure that we shall laugh in the other world ; and without doubt we ought to take the surest side."

Thou wilt see by this specimen that she was an amiable fool——Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

TO GLAZIR.

YESTERDAY, while I was seated on the banks of the *Seine*—a river that may well be proud of watering the finest city in the world—I reflected on the multitude of events that have occurred since it first glided majestically along. Its waves, said I to myself, are images of the different reigns that have sometimes tormented France, and at other times rejoiced her. Those, like inundations, occasioned nothing but ruin and devastation; these, like vivifying waters fertilized the soil.

I observed with an attentive eye, those little whirlpools that were formed in an instant and hurried away by the stream,

without leaving any trace to shew where they had been. This moving picture warned me of the rapidity of our years, which pass on till they are lost in the gulph of eternity, in the same manner as rivers precipitate themselves into the sea.

Whence comes time, that insensibly destroys us? Whither does it return? Exhausting itself imperceptibly, and renewing its existence in similar way, it remains a mystery that we cannot unfold. The new century that advances is nearer to us than yesterday:—the one will exist, the other is no more. I never hear the clock strike without regarding the stroke as a diminution of myself. “Another hour is taken from my life!” I sorrowfully cry. At length, however, I console myself by reflecting that, through good works and useful books, we may, in our turn, snatch something back from time, that robs us of our all. He wears away mighty rocks, said one of our philosophers, but he is able to consume neither our soul nor our virtue. I may say
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the same with regard to my friendship. I defy him to make the least breach in it, notwithstanding all his subterfuge and evasion. Friendship is unchangeable, because, unlike love, it depends neither on beauty, that fades; on fortune, that varies; nor on youth, that quickly passes away.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

TO GLAZIR.

WHAT gentleness! what good-nature! what loveliness!—These were the exclamations I made, in quitting a charming woman with whom I had passed several days in the country. Her disposition, pleasant as her gardens which left no sense ungratified, diffused through the family an air of cheerfulness that pervaded every bosom. Her gaiety was reflected even upon the countenance of her domestics.

I was ruminating, in a retired walk, upon the good effects that flow from the example of an amiable woman, engaged in acts of philanthropy, when the master of the house accidentally joined me. My first care being to extol the charms of his lady,

lady, he interrupted me as follows.—

“ During the first years of my marriage I found myself the most wretched of beings. I chose a wife, well born, exceedingly rich, and beautiful as the star of the morning. Still I should have perished with grief had not heaven been compassionate.”——

“ A fit of sickness, said I, was on the point of snatching her from your bosom?”

“ No such thing. Her beautiful figure had turned her brain, and caprice had rendered her insupportable. She had a thousand idle whims, particularly that of returning no answer to those who spoke to her, of paying no regard to her husband, of remaining, frequently, three days together without speaking to him:—in short, abounding in pride and disdain, she acted the fine lady, and every body around her murmured. I complained of her beauty, and earnestly wished she might be deprived of it; more especially as she had an excellent heart. My
prayer

prayer was granted. The small-pox came to my relief, and hacked, almost into piece-meal, that fine face which I had formerly adored. A single glance into her looking-glass evinced that her charms were no more! During the first few days of this crisis, she was overwhelmed with tears, which at length subsided, and reason came to console her. A pleasing affability succeeded to those haughty and disdainful airs that had before been insupportable. This was the only expedient by which she could now render herself amiable, and she hastened to put it into practice. This happy metamorphosis was soon made known to my neighbours, who, under the pretext of business, paid me a visit for the purpose of seeing my once beautiful wife. "It is not she, said they, but an arrogant woman humbled, which is a miracle."

"Heaven, said she to me, one day, has punished me for my pride and ingratitude. I have neglected that duty and respect which I owed to you as a husband,

band,

band, in a thousand different instances. At length, however, warned by the best lesson that I could possibly receive, I am become as modest and unassuming, as I was once insolent and presumptuous. My remonstrances and seditions have ceased with my beauty, which is fled, and from this moment I rest my reputation upon my character. You will find me always the same, and every body shall say, "If she is not handsome, at least she is agreeable."

"He added that, since the accident, he had been, as it were, in heaven; that his house had assumed an air of gaiety and pleasantness; that it was visited with pleasure and left with regret; that his lady received more homage than when her beauty made her arrogant."

A fine woman in Paris is almost always the torment of her husband, either by the jealousy she occasions, or by the caprice that she obliges him to endure. Her toilet alone is sufficient to drive the most phlegmatic man to distraction. *Madame*

is

is never ready either to take an airing or to dine ; and Monsieur is forced to wait, and kick his heels like a servant in livery. Nay—he must excuse all this indignity with a smile lest he should be severely scolded.

We should be wretched indeed were our wives to take upon themselves such airs of consequence. We, who perhaps reign over them with too much severity.

Women of quality, that marry tradesmen for their wealth, are another sort of scourge to their husbands. Besides the shame they have to appear in their company, they affect to mortify them by the most intolerable manners. One of these, in order to thank her husband for the immense fortune with which he had enriched her, said to the good man, a few moments before she was delivered, in the presence of half the family, “ This is suffering too much, merely to bring a plebeian into the world ! ” But mark the reverse,—A man who came from the very dregs of the people, but who possessed millions,

millions, married a German princess, hoping by this manœuvre, to raise his reputation. He was quickly afterwards held in the most sovereign contempt; but he found means to retaliate. Whenever the princess expatiated on the genealogy of her ancestors, he covered the table with pieces of gold, and while he counted them, exclaimed, " This is my father, this is my grandfather, this is my great grandfather, and this is my great grandfather's grandfather." The princess was presently softened, and eagerly sought the acquaintance of such useful relations!

May thy grey hairs be preserved in sublimity.—Adieu!

L E T T E R

LETTER XLIX.

TO GLAZIR.

N O—thou wilt never believe it! What an original adventure! Thou shouldst be at Paris, where caprices, imaginations, and singular tastes, turn people's brains in a most ridiculous manner,—thou shouldst be here, I say, in order to hear what I have heard, and see what I have seen. I will give thee an age to guess, and thou wilt be still in the dark. Once more, what an original adventure! Does it proceed from the Gauls, the Druids, or the French? A problem difficult to be solved! I am perhaps the only person in the world to whom such an accident

dent hath happened. I dare not relate it! —In the eighteenth century, in the most enlightened city in the world! what a subject!—Thus much, however, is certain: some things are true that are not probable. How could such a thought enter the imagination of a woman? Listen, and lose not a word of the story.

An overgrown lackey presents himself to my view, gives me a letter, with a mysterious air, and informs me that he will return at six o'clock in the evening for an answer. It is now about eight in the morning, and I read as follows:

“ Although a woman of the highest quality, and most unbounded riches, I shall be the most unhappy wretch existing if you refuse to attend me at six o'clock this evening. I conjure you to grant me this favour. The trouble of my soul requires your assistance, and my heart strenuously desires it. Till I behold your face, I shall continue in the most dreadful agitation; if therefore you are willing that I should live, deny me not an interview.

view. Adieu—Prepare to accomplish my happiness and repose; and remember that if you were not an Indian, you would not have my confidence. There is but one man of your nation whom I can trust, and who is capable of fulfilling my desires.”

Shall I go? Shall I not go? Is she a fool? Is she a philosopher? Is it love? Is it curiosity? Is it a courteous invitation? Is it an ambuscade? These were the thoughts by which I was actuated till the appointed hour. At length the lackey comes in search of me, and I depart.—

Every moment, I am ready to return, yet still I advance. I am introduced into a vast mansion by a little door, which is instantly shut, and I see the face of no human being. I mount enormous staircases; I pass through immense apartments. At last I begin to descend. There is no end to my journey, yet still I proceed, enfeebled with terror! A voice cries out, “Continue to descend, and you will soon arrive at the destined spot.”—I follow my

route

route till day-light begins to retire. I now stand still uncertain what to do! * * * * *

I resume my courage, and proceed till I find myself in a kind of chapel where I see the most frightful figures painted on the walls. I pass on to other apartments. The roaring of a cascade that rushes head-long into a grotto, makes me tremble with apprehension.

I will confess to thee that I now heartily repented of my imprudence. My boldness of spirit, however, soon returned, and I said to myself "After all, what misfortune can befall me? Death?—Well! if it were not to come to-day it would come to-morrow; and a subject of Hyder Alli, of Tippoo Sultan, was never born to die a coward."

A door now opens, but still I see nothing. At last, a black man, huge even to deformity, and not unlike those hellish beings that we see painted in pictures, advances and beckons me to approach, without speaking a single syllable. A female,

male, whose hair is dishevelled, and who is about fifty years of age, now appears, and cries with a loud voice, " In the name of the Eternal, and under the sign of the infernal spirits that obey his commands, thou art welcome."

The place was dark and horrible, and no one was present except this singular woman, and black man. They desired me to place myself between them, and I sat down, crying with a turbulent tone " Were I not an Indian, I should doubtless be affrighted at these preparations; but, with the same sabre that formerly cut the Marhattas into a thousand pieces, and severed the heads of Englishmen from their bodies, I will defend my life, or sell my blood at a high price."

" God forbid that we should have murderous designs, said the female, softening her voice, there were never any combats in this place, but those of infernal and celestial spirits, that wrestle with each other, and produce most wonderful scenes. Although I have the strongest desire
fire

fire to see them, I have never succeeded in my design ; and it is this that gives me torment. If we have caused you to pass through gloomy defiles, by which you may have been terrified, it was because we were apprehensive of the officers of the police. The moment any thing extraordinary happens in a house, these people seize its inhabitants, and conduct them to a prison, from which, perhaps, they never escape.—You must know that I have been devoted to the study of necromancy ever since I was twenty years old ; and that it was an aunt of mine, who could converse with demons, that instructed me in the science. Soon after her decease, I lost my husband, and from that moment fortune, honours, pleasures, beauty,—in a word, all allurements were incapable of occupying my attention. I have had the good fortune to see the most eminent magicians in these apartments, although our science is not so much in fashion as formerly. Levity and dissipation have at length banished all studies

studies but such as are superficial; and every thing that has a tendency to the marvellous passes for a chimera. Unwilling to take the trouble of going to the bottom, we slightly glance upon the most extraordinary subjects: even animal magnetism is laughed to scorn; and we daily grow in ignorance.—The stranger whom you see is an African, well known in the societies of cabalists, Rosicrucians, and necromancers. He has communicated to me the most sublime intelligence. It was he who told me, illustrious foreigner, that you were an Indian, perfectly conversant in these affairs; and as I am well informed that your countrymen have always corresponded with the powers of darkness, of which powers Saint Paul himself speaks, who was one of the first teachers of christianity; I conjure you in the most serious manner, to instruct me in the method of raising those infernal beings. This is my sole desire,—my only passion; and in order to gratify it, I would give my right arm, and my entire fortune. I have actually

tually thirty persons in my subterraneous apartments, who are labouring in search of universal medicine, and who, by their extraordinary activity and illumination of mind, are on the point of finding it; but they have not the art of conjuring up tartarean spirits. If I could once grow familiar with one of these, I should learn the profoundest secrets, such as rendering myself invisible, finding myself in various places at the same time, and others of the like kind."

I should have taken this woman for a lunatic, if she had not astonished me by her extraordinary knowledge, and if her conversation had not been perfectly consistent. It would be a difficult matter to find more science, or more understanding.

I contented myself with replying that those Indians that were still barbarians continued to pay their respects to demons, who I believed had never made them any recompense for their adulation: that it was with these beings as with oracles,

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whose

whose tricks were, at present, sufficiently known and understood. I added, that violent passions were the only demons with which I was acquainted; and that if the angel of darkness revealed themselves to mankind, it was only for the purpose of suggesting evil thoughts. I observed, moreover, that as the alcoran agreed with the gospel upon this point, it appeared that infernal spirits were not fabulous; but that it was still impossible to determine the degree of influence that they had over us. She proceeded to give me a learned dissertation on the different descriptions of demons that had been spoken of in all countries, since the beginning of the world. She even repeated their names without hesitation, and shewed me the characters that expressed them, in Turkish, Arabian, and Egyptian books. The black man heaved, from time to time, the deepest sighs, because the moment was not arrived in which he should be at liberty to converse with devils.

I concluded

I concluded by telling our illustrious adept that I was much surprised that she had not made the desired discovery : that her imagination having been so long affected by such objects, it was really wonderful that she had not seen phantoms of every kind, in her dreams, and taken them for realities.

Would you believe it ? She spoke of the ramblings of the *imagination* as if she had been the most phlegmatic person living, deploring with bitterness the fate of those who were its victims, and felicitating herself for having always kept *hers* within just bounds.

The only light we had was now suddenly extinguished, and our two personages began to howl most terribly, in hopes that the demons would appear. They were answered from the hollow caverns underneath, and I shuddered with apprehension.

Silence and light at last returned, and after a pause of several minutes they de-

fired me not to be alarmed. “ Morning and night, said they, we repeat the same cries and lamentations, agreeably to the advice of a Calabrian philosopher, who told us that this method had often succeeded.”

I thought only of regaining my lodgings. At length they rang the bell, desiring me to acquaint no one living with the adventure, and assuring me that there were many women of quality that made the same evocations, and that were tormented with the same curiosity. An old woman who had the air of a sibyl, now appeared, with a black cat under her arm: she kindled a sort of rush-light, with which she conducted me slowly across those immense halls, that I had before passed through, till we arrived at the little door, which immediately opened; and the same domestic that had brought me the letter, conducted me to my lodgings, without answering a single word to the different questions that I brought forward.

I returned,

I returned, the next day, in hopes of finding the street and house: but this was impossible, insomuch that, if I had not rubbed my eyes, I should have believed I was dreaming.

A few days afterwards I was informed that there were more than ever of these maniacs in Paris, who abandoned themselves to such illusions, and who, if it were possible, would revive the ages in which ghosts were in fashion, and the nocturnal meetings of witches regularly frequented. It is not a little extraordinary that phantoms of the like kind have gained credit in all times and in all countries. The ancients called them *Lemures*, which evinces that the soul was ever supposed to be immortal.

If I had the faculty of conjuring, I would raise neither ghosts nor devils, but I would summon thee to appear instantly in the place where I am now writing.—
Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER I.

TO GLAZIR.

TO such a degree have I been affected by the subject of my last letter, that this will contain nothing but tales of demons and of darkness. Even savages and Hot-tentots, notwithstanding the poverty of their imaginations, are fully persuaded that the dead return, and that their rambling ghosts are seen to walk the earth.

As to the more polished nations, their writings abound in tales of this kind :— tales that gained credit with the Greeks as well as among the Romans. Pliny the younger tells us in his letters, that a house in Athens was so notorious for the harbouring of spirits that no person dared to sleep within its walls; that Athe-
nodoros,

nodorus, a philosopher, who was a man of courage, ventured, at length, to take possession of the haunted fabrick; and that while he was writing in the dead of night, an apparition appeared, and, by expressive signs, invited the philosopher to follow it. He adds, that Athenodorus quitted his studies, and walked after the phantom, which took the philosopher's lamp, and, shaking its chains, descended into a court-yard, where, having struck the ground several times with its foot, it disappeared. Athenodorus, always master of himself, was unappalled. He marked the place, withdrew to his bed-chamber, and slept quietly till the following morning; when, having caused some earth to be removed, he found a skeleton, on which he bestowed the rites of sepulture.

Such is the story of Pliny, who concludes by telling us that after that time no noise was ever heard. The ancients believed that souls wandered about the bodies they had inhabited in case the latter were deprived of burial, or miserably interred.

interred. Authors have exhausted almost every subject, and after having given us such a collection of silly publications, I am astonished that they have not written a regular treatise on hobgoblins. Neither the spectres of *Du Loyer*, the works of *Langlet du Fresnoy*, nor the history of vampirism by *Don Calmet* should be omitted in a work of this kind, which would infallibly please. Even fine ladies, although they are particularly subject to the impressions of fear, would read it with the utmost ardour of inclination; for fine ladies are ever fond of the marvellous. It is impossible indeed that so many different nations should entertain but one opinion upon this subject if it were void of all foundation. Thou knowest that there are many among *us*, who pretend to have seen apparitions.—I shall never forget the lamentable history of the unfortunate *Klai*, who, while she was with her companions and her children, was suddenly smitten by a phantom, that predicted the hour of her

death, and impressed her forehead with a mark that could never be obliterated. We have both seen this mark, which was exceedingly black, and had the appearance of an hieroglyphick. She carried it to her grave, for her death fell out exactly as the spectre had foretold. Nor was this the effect of imagination. Her brother and children have told me, a thousand times, that they clearly saw the horrible apparition; that it had the appearance of a giant, and spoke in a most frightful tone of voice. We Indians are not easily affrighted; but it must be acknowledged, there are many in the world that would have expired with terror. The phantom was supposed to be the shade of a man whom this woman had caused to be assassinated.

But I will now quit the subject of demonology, in order to divert thee with a pleasant history. A jealous man, in this city, had wagered a considerable sum with his wife, that, with all her cunning, she could not admit a single visitor into

his house, without his knowledge. One evening he was told that a farmer, who was one of his tenants, desired permission, as it grew late, to put his horse into the stable. The gentleman takes his spying glass; looks out of the window, and perceives only the horse, and the countryman holding his bridle. He himself gives him the key, desiring him to return it as soon as has relocked the door. All is safe,——he remains at the window till he is convinced that the farmer is withdrawn, whom he wishes a good evening. This was the second edition of the Trojan horse; for it concealed a charming military officer, who sallied forth, armed from head to foot, stormed the lady's chamber, passed the night in her arms, and, when morning arrived, bid good morrow to the husband, who was obliged to pay the stipulated sum. Nay, he was even compelled to open the door for the man that had treated him so scurvily. He excused himself by saying that he was not fearful of a sword, but that the adventurer,

venturer, without doubt, had pistols besides ; and that no courage whatever could withstand such united force. The wife made her escape, the same day, and the poor husband is become the laughing stock of the street in which he resides.

The tragic is often mingled, here, with the comic ; otherwise this city would be insupportable.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

TO GLAZIR.

IF our histories of India were faithfully rendered, the translations of them would be excellent; particularly as they would contain the most extraordinary adventures with regard to demonology. It appears by the ancients that the devil formerly took great pleasure in shewing himself: but, either this whim has now left him, or else he has chosen other countries for the scenes of his excursions. As he is now grown old, who knows if he has not lost the use of his legs, more especially as he has been a greater traveller?

There is one passage in our demoniacal history which is comical enough. It is said

said that nothing can be more pleasant than the stratagem he makes use of to procure himself a body, when he is forced to make a journey. He repairs to the houses of men that are buried in profound sleep. From one he takes a leg, from another an arm, which he fixes in their proper places,—in short, he proceeds, till he has fabricated all the members, necessary to the composition of a complete figure. We are assured, that notwithstanding he is generally careful to bring back what he has borrowed, before the persons are awakened, it happened, one morning, that he did not return till a man, who found himself without an arm, had begun to swear like a pagan.—The arm was thrown on the bed; it replaced itself by a convulsive motion, and occasioned the death of the wife, who expired through horror! The same story informs us that the lassitude we feel while we are rising is produced by the same means.

Every

Every country, my friend, has its tales, its fables, its superstitions. But I would not speak this too loudly, for there are people here, that are firmly persuaded of the empire of demons.

I have seen thy slaves. They speak of thee with tears in their eyes, so much are they afflicted by thy absence. What a horrid word!

LETTER

L E T T E R LII,

T O G L A Z I R.

T H E R E are men here, that are unworthy to live in the capital of France. They ought to be sent into exile, among leopards and tigers.—I mean those gentry who have a great deal of wit, but no soul; and who create infinitely more mischief than any other class of beings. Their insinuating address conducts them to the foot of the throne, where they usurp places, which they sustain only through subtilty and despotism. They are by turns stock-brokers, usurers, and impostors. Sometimes they are cringing and servile, at other times daring and arrogant: in fact they play every possible part but that of men of honour. Pity it is that

that

that their villainy were not concentrated in themselves ; instead of which, they coalesce with the vilest subalterns, excusing themselves to those who reproach them on this account, by saying that their profession stands in need of such recruits. In one respect, however, the times are happily changed. These people were, formerly, complimented with dedicatory epistles ; now they are flattered only in pamphlets. They are scourged without the least risk to the man that dares to inflict the punishment ; and, if this does not reclaim them, at least, it keeps their successors within due bounds.

There are persons in this city that make excellent observations on the state of the nation ; but unfortunately they live unknown. I meet them every where, listen to them with delight, and am most pleased with them because they are not sticklers against the government. I was lately at the *Thuilleries* ; and one of the terraces was filled with politicians of this description, that took refreshments in
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the open air. There was among them, however, a man who, terribly enraged against the age, against Paris, against the court, and against himself, was giving a loose to the most violent invectives. He foamed at the mouth like a venomous animal, railing most vehemently, and at random, against every thing that was respectable, without regard to persons. People left him, terrified at his conversation, and returned, charmed by his wit. But what kind of wit?—"If it were to fall, said a stranger, I would not stoop to pick it up."—

Our supposed patriot continued to make use of insolent and reproachful language; and his auditors clapped their hands, without even hearing what he said. I made my way to him through the throng, and was informed that Europe, at present, does not possess common sense; that she ought to be new modelled, or, at least differently bestowed; that Poland should unite with Prussia, in order to gain her ancient possessions,

sessions, binding herself to furnish fifty thousand effective men, in every case of emergency; and that, with the alliance of the Turk, she would stand in fear neither of Austria nor Russia; that, moreover, the throne of Poland might be secured to the king of Prussia's son: and that France might gain possession of the low countries, by giving Corsica to the Emperor.

By this time, so many people had gathered round us that, to be more at my ease, I stole away. There are continually little spectacles of this kind, which recreate idle people, and engage the attention of politicians. They cost nothing; and those who seek to kill time, though in fact time kills them, are agreeably amused, and return home more contented with their day's work than if they had really administered relief to their country.

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

 TO GLAZIR.

FORMERLY a young man waited till he was five and twenty years old, before he mingled with society. At present, he begins to play his part on the stage of life, ere he is fifteen;—and at so early an age, he speaks and determines with confidence. This custom, although not dangerous to a young man whose manners are already formed, is infinitely so to an inexperienced youth, who is always desirous of imitating those grown persons with whom he associates. A fondness for gaming, the love of superfluous expence, and a passion for women are his constituent principles. Instead of listening to advice, he now gives it; nor will he obey his parents because he is told that such conduct is Gothic.

A lady

A lady of distinction, who wishes me to take one of her sons to India, the other day told me her grievances. " I know very well, said she, that youth will pay a tribute to folly; and that it is impossible, before we arrive at the age of twenty years, not to commit some act of imprudence. This mania is the small-pox of the mind, and we ought to draw a sponge across such errors when they are not accompanied by unworthiness."

I have indeed remarked that the effervescence of youth ought to be checked; but that if it be entirely smothered the worst effects will follow. We are sufficiently happy if these little follies leave us with our youthful days, instead of adhering to us till we reach the very edge of the tomb. What can be more ridiculous than an old man who, dressed like the gaudy butterfly, repeats amorous discourses to young women? He is hissed in the very moment when he expects applause. These beings, however, are exceedingly numerous in Paris, inasmuch
that

that half the prostitutes that walk the streets, subsist upon their infamous bounty. They neglect their wives, their children, their families,—they pursue their licentious pleasures in broad day-light, and spin out their debaucheries to the last moment of their existence. I shudder at the idea!—This is making a flower-garden out of a church-yard. Did they know how they are ridiculed by the very wretches that appear to adore them, they would start back with astonishment.

“What a charming nosegay to be presented with, said a woman of easy virtue to her companions, is a shrivelled skin, a fallow complexion, a gloomy eye, and an infected breath! I had rather caress an Egyptian mummy, which, at least, does not exhale such offensive odours.” This discourse, which I overheard, word for word, would have cured me for ever of the folly of attempting to appear young, if I had been really in years. But, after all, where is the man, or the woman on earth, that professes to grow old? Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER LIV.

PALMYRA to ZATOR.

I COULD willingly break all the dial, —for I despair of ever seeing the hour that will bring thee to my arms. The hand turns and returns incessantly, but the adorable Zator does not yet appear! Were a day fixed, when I might certainly see the object of my love, I would be consoled; but this incertitude seems to have the length of a whole eternity.

I have received thy letter, but it is a dead letter, notwithstanding the heat of thy expressions.—Alas! there is no animation in a written paper? Fancy and
 illusion

illusion ought to unite for the purpose of inspiring it with the symptoms of life.

Peace hath reigned among us ever since thy commands arrived ; but how insipid and spiritless is such a peace, when it is not maintained by thy presence ! Thou forgettest that I am not merely a wife, but a lover ; and that my breath invokes and calls upon thee every time it is respired. The ladies of Paris may be as beautiful and accomplished as they please ; but you will not find one among them that surpasses me in sentiment. Every evening I read thy letters with the rest of thy wives. This is indeed a poor consolation, but still it is some little alleviation of our misery.

Our ambassadors continue, without doubt, to render thy situation agreeable. I presume that thou knowest them ; and that they are acquainted with thy merit.

Thy children, every morning, lift their little hands towards heaven, in hopes that *their* innocence will insure *thee* its benedictions.

nedictions. For me, I fear I am not sufficiently pure to obtain such favours. I commend thee to our great prophet ; and thou canst not have a better protector.—A thousand kisses!—A thousand adieus!—I join them all in this letter, which I have extracted from my very heart, and which I would write with my blood, were it possible to preserve its heat.

Be watchful over thy slaves. Travel-ling is dangerous to the health and manners of youth.

LETTER

L E T T E R. LV.

 T O G L A Z I R.

I HAVE lately visited the colleges. The re-union of these different schools has formed what is called here an university. Theology, physic, the sciences, and the laws, are the objects of study; and the students acquire various appellations of honour, according to the progress they make in these literary employments. Such encouragements are absolutely necessary, to provoke emulation.

The scholars are exceedingly numerous, and they were once formidable on two accounts. First because they studied to a more advanced age; and youth was then

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more

more robust and better formed. Secondly because, the police being more neglected, than at present, it was no difficult matter to excite commotions. Paris would be a dangerous and dreadful place did not the severity of the laws and of magistrates, keep the multitude within due bounds. By creating terror they enchain the passions, and the citizen sleeps in tranquillity with no ramparts between him and the public, except glass windows. Both horse and foot soldiers are distributed through the different quarters, and at a moment's notice, collect themselves together, to prevent insurrections. I lately witnessed an effervescence of the populace, which was stopped in an instant :— Each person returned to his duty, and a dead calm succeeded to a most dreadful tempest, that seemed ready to burst forth. A hundred years ago, as we learn from tradition, a man could not quit his house, during the night, without trembling. At present night, in Paris, is another day, such a brilliant light is scattered through the

the streets. Many accidents, however, have lately been occasioned by carriages, whose ridiculous elevation renders them more dangerous than ever. Scarcely a day passes in which somebody or other is not mangled or crushed to pieces by a wheel. Perhaps, as fashions are hourly growing more refined, we shall soon see these coaches, like the cars of goddesses, drawn by turtles and sparrows. It must be acknowledged that this would be an admirable improvement.

I have received no letter from Urta-bek. Without doubt he is wandering upon the ocean, whither his business and curiosity have conducted him, and mixing the useful with the agreeable, which is certainly the best method of travelling.

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LETTER

LETTER LVI.

TO GLAZIR.

I DINED, to-day, with our ambassadors, who depart not from the law prescribed by our prophet, although they are in the midst of a city where people are far from being scrupulous in the article of religion.

It is said that the christian dervises are not much more zealous than men of the world; and that whilst our reverend pastors, like automats, appear to be deprived of all sensation, theirs have a language of the eyes which they use on all occasions.

Two Italian travellers made me a proposal, some time ago, to visit a monastery
about

about thirty leagues from Paris, where, as they informed me, there are hermits that never speak. I thanked them with all my heart, assuring them at the same time, that I had much rather pay a visit to persons that could entertain me with pleasant conversation. If we are edified by remaining silent, statues must, in course, be amazingly learned! Surely this is to pervert the design of the divine legislator, who commands us to speak wisely. It appears by such singularities as if they tacitly condemned him for giving us tongues! But men are always in extremes.—

Let us suppose, for a moment, that every one, in order to arrive at the highest point of perfection, were to condemn himself to silence. What confusion would follow!—Men would become as the wild beasts of the forest; and there would be neither commerce, nor science, nor society. The best proof of our being born for the purpose of speaking is, that we have the faculty of speech. But the superior

perior of a convent must be infinitely more at his ease when the monks are not allowed to speak; and it is my firm opinion that almost all the introducers of perpetual silence have had this object in view. A dervise himself, whom I lately accosted, one indeed that belongs to a speaking order, told me, according to *Fleury*, that the majority of founders had taken singularity for their guide; and that their absurd customs and habits seemed to have no other original.

We were insensibly led into various arguments; and during our walk, he conducted me to his garden. I freely told him what I heard every day, respecting the delicious life of monks, and the immense riches they possessed. He proved to me that their manner of living was extremely frugal; and that, notwithstanding their pretended riches, they did not really enjoy the common necessities of life.

“ That voracious man, said he, that is appointed to devour us, makes us,
grow

grow terribly lean, while he himself fattens on our substance; and it is in consequence of having unfortunately called our houses abbeys, that we are so badly arranged. But commendatory abbots, who are always quarrelsome, are our greatest enemies. When I see them in their coaches, I conjecture within myself whether such a course will carry them; and I tremble lest, at the end of their journey, they should be tumbled headlong—you know where!—We are also much embarrassed, he continued, with regard to worldlings. If we treat them handsomely they accuse us, at their departure, with living like epicures; if, on the contrary, we receive them ordinarily, they declaim against our avarice, and complain loudly of their bad reception.”

I asked him if it were true that they wished to gain their liberty, and to be sent into the world. He replied without reserve, that such might be the wish of young men that were not thoroughly converted; but that the embarrassment
that

that friars must necessarily sustain, who should determine to re-appear in the world after an absence of so many years, as well as the trifling subsistence that would be allowed them, attached them by preference to the cloister; and that the expence of living in common, however moderate it might be, would become considerable if they were to live afunder. All this appeared rational; but what I could not readily forgive was, that, the dinner-bell happening to ring, he left me abruptly, and ran towards the refectory; assuring me that uniformity was absolutely necessary in their way of life. Thus his propensity to gormandizing prevailed over his natural politeness.

Thou tellest me nothing of my slaves. I conjure thee to see and to intimidate them. Such persons are conducted only by fear; but I would not wish them to be beaten, because they are men as well as ourselves. Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER LVII.

TO GLAZIR.

AMONG the different lotteries that are distributed through Europe, with a wonderful profusion, there is one in particular, by which I was lately seduced. It was invented by the *Genoese*, a set of men highly ingenious. A man in the public streets announced with a loud voice, that this lottery would be drawn on the morrow: I was desirous of becoming an adventurer, and therefore paid my money, without an idea of ever seeing it again.— I had indeed almost forgotten the circumstance, when one of my slaves, several days afterwards, informed me that I had

gained two thousand *Louis d'ors*. This intelligence was pleasant enough, and I said to myself, " If thou wouldst continue fortunate, run no further risks."— I thought it my duty to devote one half of it to the unfortunate, as well Christians as Mahometans, both being equally my fellow-creatures.

The foregoing event threw me into profound reflections concerning the *original cause* of our gains and losses, at this perilous game; and I discoursed a long while with a very intelligent man upon the subject, who at length acknowledged that he knew nothing of the matter. If God himself be the cause, why does the man never win who puts into the lottery with a view to relieve the poor, or to procure his daily bread; while a bad subject, whose conduct is execrable, gains almost impossibilities? Is it chance? Here is another and perhaps a greater difficulty; for, as chance is a nonentity, and as nothing can come from nothing, how can chance be the author of good or evil?

evil? Still, as there exists an effect, there must be a cause: but what labyrinth must we explore before we are able to find it?

After various discussions, the learned man with whom I conversed, exclaimed, "There is one truth that presents itself to my mind, and I believe we must not depart from it, if we would solve the enigma. The Eternal, in the immensity of his views and decrees, sees a thousand things that we cannot, and never shall see. As he recompenses good works with temporal blessings, it may happen that when a prize falls into the hands of a spendthrift who will use it liberally and charitably, it is meant as his reward. But the good man who loses in the lottery will find himself amply indemnified for his privations by receiving an *eternal recompense*. Besides God, being able to look into futurity, must have seen that this good man who seemed disposed to throw his winnings into the hands of the unfortunate, would have changed his opinion, had he become rich; and thus the money
which

which was won by the spendthrift would absolutely have worked the good man's destruction.

The supreme Being is just:—this is an unanswerable proposition. And that nothing happens without his consent, is another equally true. Hence we may fairly conclude that our ignorance is the cause of the false opinions we maintain. If there were things that God could not see, he would not be God; and if he saw without being able to reform or prevent them, he would, in course, be governed by some higher power.—But where is the power than can restrain the Almighty?—

What thinkest thou of this reasoning, my dear Glazir, thou that formerly studiedst metaphysics with such success? I appeal to thy superior understanding, and shall be proud to have thy decision upon the subject.

Art thou not astonished that I am influenced in so small a degree by *pleasures*, in a city like Paris, where every thing suggests voluptuousness? I regard them

as

as snares which are every where spread to catch passengers. Here you are tempted by women ; there, by shops, deccrated in a most seducing manner. Here you see coaches, glittering as the car of Apollo ; there, the circus of a *Palais Royal*, where the senses are attacked on every side. Here are spectacles of every denomination ; there, exquisite tables, covered with the finest fruits of the earth, and the most delicious wines. Here you are gratified with the sweetest perfumes ; there, with sounds of melodious instruments, and the most enchanting voices.

Such is the merit of my resistance, that I pass through the midst of pleasures as I pass through a flower-garden ; smelling at one flower, admiring another, but never stopping to gather any.—Adieu !

LETTER

LETTER LVIII.

TO GLAZIR.

WHO would believe, considering the place whence I write, that my letters were so rational? I think I hear a fine lady cry, “The man is mad!—What could possibly induce him to handle moral and metaphysical subjects in the very bosom of Paris, where we can neither walk without dancing, nor speak without singing? In Paris, the vortex of gaiety, the centre of pleasures, the dwelling place of loveliness? This is overturning the order of things!”——“For me, cries a man of fashion, when I write from Paris, I choose gilt paper bordered with flowers, and softer than satin. I use the quill of a turtle, with the most glossy ink; and insert the prettiest possible phrases, to the end
that

that my letter may bear the stamp of the capital. I perfume it with odoriferous scents; taking especial care that it contain nothing but amiable frivolities, random phrases, filligree thoughts, and new coined words. A letter is insupportable if it be not impressed with the seal of elegance. Does it treat of love? It should abound in *ohs!* and *ahs!* and *alasses!*—— Is grief the subject? It should consist of points: the words should be cut short, and the style ought to be hesitating, and hacked into pieces. The less we love, the more violent should appear our affliction, and the more tender our sentiments.”——

A lady lately pretended to be desperately in love with a gentleman, whom she had attached to her, by a thousand professions and demonstrations; forgetting even what she owed to her sex and condition, in order to lavish upon him the most endearing caresses. Letters every day, passed reciprocally between them; and in the moment when their mutual
flame

flame seemed to blaze most furiously, the lover received an enormous packet from her whom he adored. His heart palpitated, his whole soul was moved: the mere inspection of the seal and handwriting produced a two-fold emotion. He opened the packet without knowing what he was about: his memory was confounded, his sight failed; and, to such a degree was he agitated, that he was obliged to read it over twice before he could comprehend its contents.—At length he perceived all his own letters, his transports, his raptures, which his charmer had returned with the utmost indifference and unconcern: assuring him that such a flat and insipid style was unworthy the regard of a woman of fashion. She earnestly desired him to burn his vile trash; and informed the unhappy lover that she had asked pardon of all the muses for having kept his letters so long in her possession.

Thou mayest judge as thou shalt think proper of my style, provided thou givest me credit for the vigorous expressions of my heart. Adieu!— L E T T E R

LETTER LIX.

 TO GLAZIR.

A SHARPER, summoned before the police for having been handsomely dressed, and well lodged and boarded without a single farthing in his pocket, received orders to quit Paris, where he could, of course, subsist only at the expence of the public. After having heard the humiliating sentence pronounced, he replied, “ I have ever been told that the place where we can live best, is our proper country ; and where could I be, better than in this large city, where I spent my life agreeably,—where I receive every thing, and pay nothing? Those who know me, envy my fate, as the fate of a citizen that fears neither the diminution

nution of rents, the imposition of severe taxes, nor the fluctuation of the stocks. Besides, if I am banished on account of my poverty, I ought to be accompanied by at least thirty thousand young men whom I know ; for there are more than thirty thousand in Paris, that have no patrimony but their *industry*. It is not by soliciting favours that I procure dinners and suppers ; for I appear always to go with great reluctance to the houses of gentlemen by whom I am invited. Every thing consists in talent and address.—To one I say, “ In order to oblige you, I have broken my engagement with a duke ; to another, if you will dine an hour later than usual, I shall be at your service, for I must necessarily attend the levee of the minister.”——The court, pleased with his candour and gaiety, suffered him to range at liberty.

It is a custom among adventurers to present themselves, on the days of public audience, at the ministers' houses. They never speak to these great men, nor are they

they even known by them ; but they appear with an air of importance, and, losing themselves in the crowd, converse with one, and laugh with another, till they form alliances, which are the more dangerous, because these gentry are enabled to say, “ We first saw each other in the minister’s drawing-room.”

An Indian would perish a thousand times before he would have recourse to such craftiness. If you would live at Paris, you must be poor or rich in the extreme, for mediocrity is insupportable. Creditors torment, without ceasing, the man who owes twenty shillings ; while he who owes them immense sums, remains unmolested, because they think he is rich.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

TO GLAZIR.

FRANCE is truly a country of prodigies. In this city the deaf are made to hear, the dumb to speak, and the blind to see. An abbe who goes unrewarded among a thousand useless ecclesiastics that devour all the loaves and fishes, has taken upon himself the care of instructing the afflicted of whom I am speaking.— He keeps a public school; and it is a most touching spectacle to see him perform. With the assistance of gestures, signs, and letters which he marks out with chalk, he makes himself understood; insomuch that both the deaf and the dumb divine the signification of every word he writes,
and

and exprefs it by the moft fignificant figns. Joſeph the Second came with great eagereſs to ſee this venerable abbe, who certainly merited ſuch a favour, on account of his intelligence and extraordinary virtues, of which *patience* is, by no means, the leaſt. I have ſeen him give leſſons, and have been pleaſed to the very ſoul. Even the moſt abſtruſe words are rendered, by figns, clear and precise. But, would you believe that the Pariſians themſelves are leſs curious than ſtrangers to ſee ſuch a phenomenon; and that the greater part of the nobility have never viſited this academy? It ſeems that they are afraid of inſtruction, and think they have done enough when they have talked all day without ſaying a word!—Farewell!

LETTER

L E T T E R L X I.

TO ONE OF THE INTERPRETERS OF
THE LAW.

MINISTER of heaven's vengeance and mercy ;——for by this double title I supplicate thy pre-eminence to punish *Walberc*; and to pardon him. I took upon me the care of his education from his earliest moments, and he discovered the sublimest dispositions ; but I am informed that he has lately transgressed thy commands, and rendered himself culpable of indiscretion.

I deliver him up to thy great soul, which, being fast bound to the Alcoran, can do nothing but what is conformable
to

to its letter. Thou sayest that he is the very essence of charity. On this account, the spirit of divine peace that rests in thy bosom, will not permit thee to inflict a punishment too severe. The flame of anger will be less vigorous than the flame of benevolence:

My residence at Paris has not occasioned me to forget my duty. The divine law continually presents itself to my mind, and drags me from the uttermost borders of the precipices that have been dug for me by vice. My footsteps are imprinted only in places where the virtues passed before; for I follow the traces of those charming guides. The moment in which I am writing to thee, appears sacred, because of the respect that I entertain for thy sublime person and high dignity. The mountains shall fall sooner than the ministers of our prophet shall be overthrown. The flowers with which profane love decorates his crowns, are stolen from thee; for to thee they should
be

be offered, as to one who takes his flight to the very bosom of the stars, and receives from them a divine light, unknown to the vulgar. I kiss the threshold of thy dwelling-place, and prostrate myself, with my face buried in the dust which has been trampled upon by thy sacred feet!

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

TO SOLIMA.

I HAVE not yet written to thee respecting the nobility that inhabit these latitudes, because I was willing to observe them scrupulously before I attempted to sketch their portraits. Princes, ministers, dukes, ambassadors, counts, and marquisses, all—have attracted my attention, and I am enabled to speak of them without partiality.

Some have a natural affability which appears to be clouded by their dignity:—they wish to become more communicative; but, at the same time, they are afraid of lessening their grandeur. Others,

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by a look of furliness, endeavour to make themselves amends for their suppleness at court:—that is to say, they straiten themselves after being most servilely bent. There are among them, men of education; and those that have not this advantage, have, at least, the talent of appearing to be learned. They are acquainted with the technical terms of arts and sciences, insomuch that painters and architects who are employed by them, listen with admiration, and wonder at *my lord's* profound knowledge in their professions. The story passes from tongue to tongue till his lordship's reputation is established. To this we may add that the nobility in question often invite an academician, or in other words, a great talker under that title, to their tables. The result is a confluence of encomiums upon his excellency; for an academy is absolutely a manufacture of encomiums.

The great have generally an imperfect idea of happiness, because they are only beneficent by halves. The true enjoyment

ment of riches, consists in doing good without reserve, and without partiality; but they are thunderstruck when a generous action is proposed to them. He who has need of their support loses their protection, because their protection consists solely of words. "I know them so well," said a gentleman to me, the other day, that if a letter be shewn to me that has been addressed to them, I can predict their answer word for word. They keep a precedent book of refusals, and when they say that on all occasions they will be your most humble servants, it is a sure sign that they do not mean to serve you at all."

One of these obliging lords professed himself the friend of a man of merit, and promised him every thing; but always when the unfortunate man petitioned for a particular place, he replied, "Ask me for any other thing in the world, and you shall be convinced how desirous I am of giving you satisfaction." He kept him in this situation for ten years, when the

dependent, losing all patience, said to his patron, " I am poor.—I do not possess twenty shillings in the world; but I would not change my existence for yours, for I never deluded any man with vain pretensions."

The rich and great, as well here as in other places, know how to *lose* without knowing how to *give*. There is but one nobleman in Paris that keeps a public table for strangers. You must attend a long while before you can accost a lord, whose custom is to amuse himself with a spaniel or parrot while the unlucky petitioner is left to kick his heels in an anti-chamber. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXIII.

TO GLAZIR.

LOVE is here dressed out in a thousand different ways. He is a perfect Proteus, for he assumes every possible shape. He is found in pamphlets, prints, pictures; on snuff-boxes, muffs, gauzes, and ribands:—yet, with all this, people do not love a whit the better. Nothing can be colder than conjugal love, nothing more variable than that of lovers. “Our young men of fortune love only themselves,” said a lady to me, who was in despair at finding her charms neglected.

Love generally ceases where lewdness begins. I was desirous of knowing from the Parisians themselves whence proceeded the real cause of this disorder; and they

they replied that their young men, who were libertines at an early age, seldom gave the first fruits of their love to the women whom they married; that they were disgusted with marriage, even before the ceremony was over; that their brides, dissatisfied with such conduct, bestowed their affections elsewhere; and that love, thus tossed about, was no more than the shadow of himself.

The Parisians want a few degrees of our sun, to give new warmth and spirit to their love and friendship. Love is an immense tree, planted in a burning soil, which produces only venomous fruits if they be not grafted upon marriage. This passion, too, loses itself in words; for it is, for ever, boasting either in prose or in poetry, of its own perfections.—True love is no babbler.

But I will proceed to a little adventure which thou oughtest to be made acquainted with. A little being, half grey, half black—every thing, remember, is little in this business—knocks at my door,
shews

shews me a little figure, and offers his little services. This was a little abbé, who wished to serve me in the double capacity of antiquary and introducer. "There are three sorts of abbés, said he, —instructive and enlightened abbés who honour their profession, scandalous abbés who are a disgrace to it, and lastly frivolous abbés, who live as well as they can, and perform little atchievements, in order to procure themselves a mere existence. I am one of these last; and I assure you, my lord—a title he frequently repeated—that I can be serviceable to your affairs. I execute commissions of every kind. Do you wish for pleasant, or serious books? I can purchase them, with promptitude. If a lady be in the case, I embroider, I handle the scissars, I watch the monkey, I compliment the parrot, I run for the doctor, I announce the best milliners and mantua-makers, I write letters and messages,—in a word, I do every thing that is necessary to be done. If a nobleman honours me with his confidence,

dence, I conduct him to every place where there are objects of curiosity.— When he steps into his carriage, I assist him with my arm, and hold his umbrella.

“ There are more than an hundred of our fraternity who are continually upon the look out for the arrival of strangers, and who render themselves serviceable by their complaisance and little attentions. They are often liable to the punishment of a severe jest, or disdainful look; of these, however, they are entirely regardless. Alas! of what consequence is it that we are ridiculed, provided that we live? We are the first to laugh at these humorous publications which handle us roughly. It seems that burlesque comedies and pamphlets would have no poignancy if we were not allowed to figure in them. An author lately detained me for half an hour, at the *Palais Royal*, and afterwards had the insolence to inform me that he had been all the while, sketching

sketching my character, for the purpose of introducing it into a new farce."

The abbé appeared to be a pleasant fellow, but he was hungry, and I gave him a dinner. I entreated him to relate a few adventures respecting his fraternity, but he observed, that the clergy sufficiently disgraced themselves, and had no sort of occasion for detractors.

These abbés generally dissipate their fortunes at Paris; and, from what I have told thee, thou wilt acknowledge that they make a noble use of the goods of religion. Were the donors to rise from their tombs, how would they be surprised! They would burst into holy rage, and the amphibious abbés, would be annihilated under the weight of their just indignation.

LETTER LXIV.

TO GLAZIR.

THEOLOGY, metaphysics, poetry, medicine, natural philosophy,—all are offered us, in detail, every morning. Loose sheets containing extracts from the most celebrated works, are distributed through the city, and the mind is nourished by them in a manner equally useful and agreeable. They wonderfully assist the ignorant; and even the learned themselves meet with traits that refresh their memories. These daily resources force, as it were, the inhabitants of Paris to become skilled in scholastic knowledge. Novelties appear continually; and every analysis that is made from them, is extremely serviceable to persons who have
neither

neither time to read, nor money to purchase originals.

I ought to have told thee that a journalist is one who passes judgment upon new books; and that although the criticism of journals be not always * impartial, it corrects authors, and challenges good taste. Since I began to read these publications, I have acquired a volubility of speech, and am, at length, become thoroughly versed in French literature. There are men who impatiently wait the appearance of journals, in order to appear learned. Without them they would not have a word to say: but in quoting from them anecdotes and phrases, they pass for intelligent people. This puts me in mind of what a gentleman said to me the other day, who is remarkable for his ele-

* It is almost impossible to avoid remarking, in this place, that our national criticism, particularly that of the *revue*, has a manifest advantage over the criticism of our Gallic neighbours:—To good taste, and sound erudition, the authors of these periodical publications certainly add the necessary ingredient, impartiality. C. S.

gant verses. " I never made a rhyme in my life, said he, but I have a skilful method of selecting odes, elegies, and epigrams of the last century, by which means I pass for an original wit." In Paris impudence composes more than three parts of merit, and consequently of reputation.

—Adieu.—

LETTER

LETTER LXV.

DURTABECK to ZATOR.

I KNOW not if this letter will ever fall into thy hands, for I write to thee in the transports of my friendship, uncertain whether or no thou residest still at Paris. Be it as it may, my conscience shall be satisfied. From the banks of the Red Sea, I abandon this letter to the mercy of the winds and waves. I would address an ode to them, were I assured that they would be faithful to fulfil my desires.

Is it true that thou art pleased with Paris, and that, upon the whole, notwithstanding its disorders, thou findest reason predominant? Much frivolousness, indeed, must be passed by, before reason can be met with; but the case was exactly the same in Rome and in Athens, in spite of all the glory that is now ascribed

cribed to them. They have been exalted during more than a score of centuries, and this exaltation has given them an air of importance.

Remember that I partake of thy pleasures and amusements. Make me therefore to enjoy all that is excellent in the arts, sciences, and fashions. When I was at Paris, the manners of the French were less refined than at present, but on the other hand, the Parisians were not so much addicted to extremes. There is a certain moderation which appears poignant in a smaller degree, but which is by no means without its merit. Women formerly were modest and reserved at places of public entertainment; and if they were not wise, they had, at least, the appearance of wisdom.

Make provision of all thou canst hear and see that is interesting, to the end that we may be amused and instructed when we meet together. But when will such a happy event arrive? Heaven, that conducts us through the gloomy paths and windings

windings of this life, is alone capable of answering the question.

I have suffered diseases and misfortunes, in short, all the casualties that are attached to our poor humanity ; but I have consoled myself by anticipating in my mind, the time when all these troubles will come to an end ; for alas, we are infinitely more happy or unhappy, in imagination than in reality !

Having lost my three slaves, I am left entirely alone. I watched and attended them to the last moments of their existence, as brothers whom Providence had placed under my protection. While I was closing their eyes, they gave me a thousand benedictions. Alas, their ashes are removed far from me ; and yet perhaps their souls are near to mine. But these are impenetrable mysteries which I leave to him who alone can elucidate them, and who is unwilling that they should be revealed to us while we remain below. Adieu ! If thou preservest thy gaiety thou wilt always be happy.

LETTER

LETTER LXVI.

TO GLAZIR.

I HAVE been indisposed for several days, not being able to sleep, which gave me much inquietude, although I am no sleeper. Four hours of rest out of four and twenty are all I require.

During my illness, I was visited by a doctor of the republic of Lucca who knows nothing of physic, but who cures all the world by his cheerfulness and gaiety of heart. He told me, in a tone of voice, highly original, that disease, being unable to enter when the body was full, there was consequently no risk in eating, when we were in good health. He is a great enemy to fasting, persuaded that, as one morsel chases another, we
have

have only to double and treble the dose of aliment, when the stomach is disordered, to effect a certain cure.

He leaves the care of almost all disorders to Nature, pretending that she is a good botcher, and well knows how to take up the stitches that drop in our constitution. These were precisely his own terms.

In consequence of his mode of practice, he is the physician of I know not how many prelates, and others, who think it much better to go full, than fasting, into the other world.—Our journey thither, ought indeed, to be provided for; more particularly as there are no inns upon the road. A devotee, however, who loves good eating, believes that the saints keep inns by the way side, for the purpose of entertaining the elect, till they arrive at the heavenly palace.

I used the doctor's receipt, with moderation, and found myself much better. For eight days previously to this time, I had been deprived of bread; and fed with
chicken

chicken broth.—But physicians are always in extremes:—they generally prescribe a regimen adapted to their own tastes and prejudices. The doctor that cannot drink coffee, will, if possible, prevent all his patients from drinking it.—All disorders proceeded from soup, according to an old physician, who loved not soup himself: all disorders are propagated by tea, in the opinion of Doctor Tiffot, because the doctor holds that plant in utter aversion!

How many opinions in the world are founded on prepossession; and who is able to tell us what *opinion* really is? It springs up, it grows, and becomes stronger than the soundest judgments,—more powerful than all possible authorities. Kings themselves are brought before its tribunal, and no sooner does it pronounce sentence than the multitude are hurried away in a most astonishing manner. We see it reigning over cities and kingdoms, and subjugating sense and genius!—Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXVII.

TO GLAZIR.

IT is now the fashion neither to eat, nor to be susceptible of appetite. Gormandizing is left to financiers, luxurious morsels to abbes; and from the age of five and twenty years, people are afraid to eat suppers, because they *begin to grow old*. At least this is the modish phrase, and it is often but too true.

Some time ago I was invited to a magnificent supper, and out of forty persons that made their appearance, there were but nine that placed themselves at table. Astonished at this singularity, I observed to a person who sat near me that all those who were walking about were, doubtless,

less, sick people ; and that I was surpris'd at their keeping such late hours.

“ They are all well as you are, he replied ; but were they tormented with hunger, they would not sit down to table, because it is unfashionable. Formerly people ate five meals ; at present they scarcely eat one. Our breakfasts, dinners, collations, suppers, and midnight repasts, are all suppressed. I know a marchioness who takes no sustenance but at two o'clock in the morning,—the time when she desists from play,—because she would die on the spot, were she observed to eat. If there were no parasites, even the mode of sitting down to table would be forgotten ; and on this account they sit as long as they can, for the purpose of keeping up the custom.”

The French are extravagant in their entertainments, particularly with respect to the method of preparing them. But notwithstanding their country produces excellent wine, it is seldom found at their tables.

tables. Strangers drink it for them; yet it is not always drunk to their healths—particularly in London.

The great prophet that deprived us of wine, has not forbidden us to talk of that sparkling liquor. All legislators have ordained privations, to teach us that a sensual life, is not the life of a rational being!

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

TO GLAZIR.

A FESTIVAL was lately solemnized on one of those days when christians honour the memory of some particular saint. In these celebrations the sacred is mixed with the prophane; for in one place they pray and sing, while in another there are drinking parties and assignations. I was desirous of witnessing such a spectacle, and was conducted to the house of the nobleman who gave it. I found excellent cheer and good company. French urbanity manifested itself in the most engaging way, and the whole assembly paid me the greatest attention.

While I listened to a personage who peremptorily decided on the opinions of all

all the rest, as well as on the merit of every new publication, I said to a knight of Malta whom I knew, " This is doubtless one of your most learned men, and one who has given profound works to the public."

" Far from it, replied the knight:— he is an absolute non-entity among authors; and all his merit consists in the madness of railing at every thing that falls in his way. He plays the critic with regard to literary productions both in prose and verse, but he could not perhaps write a single page himself without filling it with blunders. We are not here the dupes of such bitter calumniators, whose order is too well known, and whose remarks are laughed at and despised."

But how ought a man to proceed, said I, in order to forestal reputation, and to receive it from their decrees?

He made it appear to me that puffers might be plentifully procured by means of good dinners. " The smallest merit becomes important when we have people

to trumpet forth our praise;—zealots, I mean, with loud voices, who disperse themselves through the city, and who, sometimes at the houses of the great, and sometimes in public places, exalt the man whom they wish to set up for a prodigy. They extol his works and his name, and do not forget to repeat panegyrics which they themselves have artfully scattered through the journals. All this while the modest man, who has nothing to recommend him but his talents and his virtues, remains in obscurity, and his productions are vilified without being read:—especially if he be not of the number of *Beaux esprits*.

Thus I see, my dear Glazir, that intrigue is here the grand support of authors and of placemen: and that they would appear to be mere dwarfs instead of giants if they had not favour for their pedestal. A work becomes popular thro' intrigue; a seat in the academy is obtained thro' intrigue; and it is thro' intrigue that men arrive at reputation. The spirit of party attempts to stifle a man's talents, and

and to asperse his manners, when it cannot obscure his genius.

Paris really furnishes an inexhaustible fund of reflections. The four quarters of the world are confounded in it, in such a manner that, without leaving this immense capital, we discover Asia, Africa, and America. It is a soil impregnated with the genius of all those different countries.—For my amusement, the other day, I actually divided Paris into four parts, giving to each the name of one of the four quarters of the globe. The quarter of *St. Honoré*, I called Europe; that of *St. Antoine*, Africa; *St. Germain* I called Asia; and the *Isle of St. Louis*, America. These places really bear no resemblance to each other, their manners being more or less refined!—

Canst thou believe that the ceremony of dress is become almost extinct? Noblemen of the highest rank walk about all the morning, dressed like their servants, without the least mark of distinction. This, they say, is commodious, N because

because their state of concealment spares them many salutations which they would otherwise be obliged to return. How many inconveniences are attendant upon good manners?—particularly when a young prelate finds it necessary to conceal his cross? Formerly it was a crime to hide this mark of ecclesiastical dignity; but, at present, my lord comes and goes without being perceived. God grant that he may make use of his disguise merely for the purpose of giving alms more privately! but

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

GLAZIER TO ZATOR.

PAST ages, like leaves extracted from the book of destiny, which the Deity himself has torn out, are swallowed up for ever in that abyss where every thing is precipitated, and whence nothing returns. Into this gulph the years that compose our mortal life are imperceptibly dropping.

This, my dear friend, is one of the reflections I make, while I am preparing for thy return. Nothing is so favourable to serious meditations as the absence of a friend. Nature, who is then in a gloomy mood, directs the soul to solemn objects,

and teaches it to philosophize. I have remarked that we cannot analyze time without being sorrowful. Always reminding us of the past, whose loss we regret, and always leaving us to glance at the future, which we are not sure of attaining to, it offers us only the present, which perishes even whilst we are talking of it!

There is, however, a way to disperse these melancholy reflections, and the following is my receipt. I never suffer my thoughts to ramble beyond the day that is passing over me; and I say to myself while I am rising—"This day will I spend without inquietude, and without troubling myself about to-morrow, which does not belong to me; and which is only an imaginary being,—a thing that does not exist!" The wretched would be far less numerous in the world, were each to say to himself, as he rises from his bed, "I am assured only of this day." It is the dread of the future that torments mankind,—a future of which we are not certain,

certain, and which generally falls out differently from our expectations.

By collecting thy letters I am compiling an abridged history of Paris: be it

L E T T E R LXX.

T O S O L I M A , N E R I S A A N D P A L M I R A .

M Y love hath not varied a single minute, nor sunk a single degree, since our union bound our hearts in indissoluble bands. I call upon my conscience, the storehouse of my most secret sentiments, to bear witness of this truth. If I have crossed the seas, it has been neither thro' distate nor inconstancy; but to find means of occupying my soul, which would prove my greatest torment if she had not nourishment proportioned to her wishes. She burns with a desire of knowledge, and her fire must be cherished. Besides, I thought it my duty to gain all possible instruction, to the end that I might serve my country the more effectually: and I concluded
that

that my children would receive a better education when I should be able to impart to them that knowledge of men and things that is acquired by travelling. We no longer live in those barbarous and barren times, when ignorance was cherished as the sovereign good; when nothing was seen but tribes of robbers and vagabonds. The French, as well as the English, have visited our country and polished our manners. As to the rest, conjugal love, by which I have been directed, is not like those transitory amours that exist only for a moment:—it grasps the soul in such a way, that neither time nor place can alter it, if a man be really honest. With regard to yourselves, your virtues and your beauty will defend you from all suspicions. Every time ye survey your charming faces in the limpid pool that is smoother than the most polished ice, ye will say to yourselves, “He would be a madman were he to treat us with infidelity.” Your lips more shining than coral, never wander from my heart, and I am
anxious

anxious for the happy moment when I shall be able to mingle my sentiments with yours, to the end that there be but one soul between us.

What will ye think of my delicacy when I tell you with my own mouth, that in the midst of all the enchantments of Paris, I have thought of nothing but you? Adieu, my dear and tender wives! I am charmed to hear that ye live in peace; that the slave who dared to prevaricate is returned to his duty; and that your only distress arises from my absence. Ye distress yourselves because I am removed to such a distance; but, as I have already remarked to you, there is no distance for souls. Were it necessary to grieve because we shall perhaps see each other no more, we ought to weep every evening before we retire to rest, for nobody is assured of seeing the following morning. I embrace you all alike, under the auspices of our divine prophet.

LETTER

LETTER LXXI.

TO GLAZIR.

THE august senate which the monarch had dispersed, I have seen reinstated. If the goddess Themis herself were to descend upon the earth, she would not appear with greater majesty! It is pity, however, that this external pomp should be darkened by the clouds of chicanery; by means of which the poor client is overwhelmed with expence, and even the counsellor that attempts to defend his cause, frequently ruins it, by his false eloquence. The method of pleading is a gross imposition. A man in a large black robe, argues before forty or fifty magistrates, who, by their seriousness and solemnity, appear to represent the Roman

senate. These magistrates would not be themselves, it seems, if they were not arrayed in distinguished habits, which generally produce a wonderful effect. There is however no difference between the dresses of barristers and those of attornies. This, in my opinion, is an evil that ought to be remedied.

The parliament, like all other societies in the world, has its calumniators; but, it must be allowed that their strictures are not always founded. When it makes no remonstrances it is reproached with timidity; when it remonstrates, it is deemed rash and precipitate.

The troubles of French parliaments proceed from their *registries*: had these always been renounced, as at this day, the result had been more fortunate.

I will bring with me several pleas, suits, and petitions of the solicitor-general *Seguier*. This singular man, who has long been the oracle of the bar, renovates his genius when he pleases, and gives it new spirit and vigour. Emperors and kings
have

have heard and admired him ; nor have these honours made him arrogant. He thinks the praises that are now scattered with such profusion, ought not to affect a great man :—that posterity alone should be regarded, and not a cluster of insignificant beings, whose suffrage is as frivolous as their talents.

Thy affection for the French language will attach thee before-hand to the memoirs that I have promised thee. Farewell!

LETTER

LETTER LXXII.

TO GLAZIR.

PREPOSSESSION is very powerful in this country; and she is almost always unjust. An author, a man of real probity, made his appearance, a few days ago, at a house to which I happened to be invited, where there was a large company. A man whom he had never seen before, mistakes him for another of inferior rank, and obstinately persisting in his mistake, begins to storm and bluster; calls his physiognomy abominable, rates his understanding below mediocrity, and regards him with an eye of disdain. The moment, however, arrived in which he

was

was undeceived, and he could not, for some time, recover from his surprize. Incidents of this nature happen every day, and yet they are not likely to be corrected. It is even said that when a man is mistaken, particularly if he be a minister or a sovereign, he ought never to retract his opinion. A principle the more detestable as these men must, in course, believe themselves to be infallible, and finally become tyrants. I lately descended into the most gloomy dungeons in Paris, for the purpose of surveying the terrible effects of such tyranny and depravity of heart. I confess my indignation arose when I saw cruelties exercised in the very bosom of France, upon its wretched inhabitants. No books! no light! no consolations!—as if it were necessary to reduce to utter despair, the unfortunate beings who had already been deprived of liberty, and were soon to be despoiled of life! Nothing but excessive cruelty could have invented such a punishment. Monsieur Neckar, whose superior talents

talents will infallibly effect the salvation of France, is expected to abolish this barbarous custom.

My visit to these prisons was chiefly for the purpose of noticing the abuses that prevail in them. That of exacting five and forty livres a month, for a chamber horrible to the view, is scandalous in the extreme. No extortions are more terrible than those of gaolers. Every thing passes through their hands, and, for the least indulgence, they must be paid beyond all measure. A prisoner should not be obliged to expend a farthing while he is in confinement, for how is it possible that he can pay his debts when he buys the most common necessaries at the most exorbitant rates? It appears to me that a man would become a bad subject in these places of horror, even if he should possess a good disposition. He would live in the very bosom of vice, and be compelled to hear the most vicious conversation.—

But where is the country in the world that stands not in need of reform? Were a
Parisian

Parisian to visit ours, what changes would he attempt to make! “ I should swoon, said a fine lady, to me, to find in India neither coaches nor caps, nor husbands such as ours :—without the *Palais Royal*, I should indubitably expire.”

The same lady informed me that she had been born in the country; and had made a vow to select a husband from this place of fashionable resort; that being mistress of her time and fortune, she repaired thither every day, and took her seat, for three hours at least; where, after having well examined the air and carriage of the company that passed and repassed, she perceived a man, whom she thought she could love. She accosted him,—they soon became acquainted; and, as it often happens that abbés are dressed like men of the world, he proved to be an abbé. It was too late to retract, and a marriage was the consequence. The husband continued his assiduities, till his lady aspired to a young fop with a large cravat, golden ear-rings, and a striped frock.

frock. In short, he picked a quarrel, the day after his wedding, with a man as rash as himself, and received a mortal wound!

The young widow, who had been a woman but a single day, was determined to be a woman no longer. She gave to her widowhood an air of virginity, and resumed the appellation of *Miss*.—A fine figure, an abundance of wit, and a great deal of levity, added to an immense fortune, render her at this moment extremely interesting. Besides all this, she has a *naïveté* that belongs only to herself. She is vexed because Paris is not shaken, from time to time, by little earthquakes being of opinion that so great a city ought to boast of *every thing*! She has an aunt, a devotee, whom she never sees. People of that description, she says, are not made for this world; she will, therefore, reserve her visits till she arrives at the next.

I cannot help loving her in spite of her extravagancies, which are so striking, and of a species so entirely new, that even misanthropists

misanthropists are diverted by them. The other day, she took a large spaniel by the paw, and exclaimed, in the midst of a numerous circle, "This gentleman shall be my knight-errant, and my friend; for since our great men have concluded that beasts are of the same nature as ourselves, I should be sorry to be without their acquaintance."

I break off, in order to visit St. Cloud, a pleasant castle, which has lately been magnificently embellished:—but it will never possess the advantages of *Meudon*, to which place the Seine conveys the tribute of her waves. This is the only situation that I would bring with me to India, if I had the faculty of removing mountains. It is simple and sublime, and the city of Paris, which appears in the back ground of the picture, multiplies its charms to a most ravishing degree.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIII.

TO GLAZIER.

I AM pleased amidst the whirl and bustle of Paris, because I am not prevented from retiring into myself. I always find two hours in the day for solid reflection;—my soul knows how to bridle her desires when she is beset with seduction.

I have chosen a little hermitage, at a small distance from Paris, where I often philosophize; and here I am sometimes visited by a friend. We together weigh the world in a just balance; and generally find it exceedingly light: but what most surprises me is that little world which we carry in our bosoms, and which, being the result of five senses, governed by an immortal soul, procures us the greatest enjoyments.

How can we be dissatisfied with ourselves if it be true that, in the twinkling

of an eye, we are able to procure a thousand pleasures? The pleasure of hearing, the pleasure of tasting, the pleasure of speaking, the pleasure of feeling, the pleasure of seeing, the pleasure of thinking, the pleasure of imagining, the pleasure of remembering:—all these are so many windows which I open in a moment, and obtain for my soul a prospect of unspeakable satisfaction. Every morning, I calculate the number of different faculties that are at my own disposal; and this *self* which I see so well enclosed and defended, penetrates me with the most lively admiration. So huge and powerful do I seem to be, that I am almost tempted to think myself a god! The universe without me is ineffectual and unimportant, inasmuch that, were there no mortals to contemplate and analyze it, it would be no more than an enormous chaos.

These *coups d'œil* thrown upon ourselves, would produce the greatest effects, if they were followed by long and habitual reflections. But who will make them? Not the sharper who has only four and twenty

hours, night and day, in which to find means of duping the public; not the petit maitre, infatuated with his figure to such a degree as never to quit his hair-dresser and looking-glass; not the man of wit, who ransacks frivolous authors for frivolous conversations; not the miser who continually counts his money without growing tired; not the vender of benefices, who prostrates himself in the anti-chambers of the great, calling every man in place *my lord*; not the idiot who, morning, noon, and night, mutters words that he does not himself understand, and who believes that he shall save his soul by forbearing to make enquiries respecting its properties!

Where then shall we find a man of reflection? Especially while the world is so dissipated that he who attempts to think passes for a Goth? It has been said that our thoughts are reserved for the ensuing age; and that the present is an age of mere words. It is not necessary that every century should be alike!—Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXXIV.

TO GLAZIER.

ROMANCES and libels, libels and romances—constitute, at present, the whole circle of French literature. They are the most precious morsels with which the Parisians regale their minds. Talents, virtues, reputations, dignities, intrigues, treasons, abuses of authority,—all are put into the same fan, and winnowed and sifted in the same way.

There are persons in this city, and their number is by no means small, who are so violently exasperated against virtuous men, that they endeavour, as much as possible, to blacken their characters, in hopes of driving virtue from the face of the earth. Even bigots have not a little contributed

contributed to her banishment. The furliness of their character, and their ferocious air, have been taken for virtue herself; while, on the contrary, the distinguishing features of that goddess are gentleness, and sweetness of disposition. One is almost tempted to say that these virtuous persons *are sorry that they are virtuous*, so sad and serious do they appear.

“ You cannot imagine what good I have done, said a dervise to me——who is called a chartreux, or carthusian friar——I have induced a number of young people to visit our monastery by assuming an air always pleasant and familiar; and the affability with which I have, at all times, received them, has drawn many from the paths of vice. We had an austere prior, whose countenance was always furrowed into frowns, but he converted nobody; while I, if I had been willing, could have made as many novices as I had visitors. The fear, however, of enticing men who were born for liberty, into a snare that can never be broken, prevented
me,

me, always, from making propositions, too lightly or indiscriminately. Were there no vows, it would be so much the better; but vows are terrible to be endured when we have not a decided vocation."

I conceived the highest esteem for this amiable man, whose example is worth a hundred books of morality.

This little adventure I related to a woman of fashion, who cried, "If I had found such a friar I should most certainly have turned nun upon the spot; for were virtue to receive as many shades as we give to ribands, I should make an excellent devotee—but I hate to see a melancholy air presiding over the conduct, dress, or countenance."

A pleasant reflection, without doubt, and though trifling in appearance, it includes a moral sense. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXXV.

TO GLAZIR.

WHAT a difference between our customs and the customs of this country! Estranged from the rest of the world, we live without intercourse, without the least knowledge of what happens in the universe; unless a revolution in our state, or some good-natured stranger gives us intelligence respecting Europe, the centre of news and adventure.

In Africa there are lions and leopards, sands and burning sands; in Asia, learned Chinese, who are so incommunicative they only live for themselves; in America negroes, parrots, sugar, and indigo; but in Europe there are arts and sciences, pageants and gazettes, books and books again!

again! It is to these little periodical sheets, which circulate through every town and village, and penetrate into every house, that we owe the privilege of knowing the revolutions of the physical and moral world, in detail; of discussing the interests of crowns; of estimating the strength of empires; and of learning their respective situations.

These gazettes, of which our countrymen are unfortunately deprived, give rise to useful conversations, bring men acquainted with every nation, and disperse them through all countries. Through their means the Parisians become intimate with the four quarters of the world, and are enabled to determine upon the projects of ministers, the birth of princes, the death of great men, and the operations of courts.

A gazette of Paris that should relate, every week, the secret adventures of that extensive capital, would, doubtless, be curious; but it would also reveal truths that are much better buried in oblivion.

O

There

There are two towns in Paris,—a town that every body sees, that every body frequents; and a subterraneous town, where every species of villainy is fabricated. He who visits the latter runs a double risk; for he is either the victim of knaves, or becomes a knave himself. Paris, however, would be unlike all other cities were it free from irregularities.

I am going to spend three days in the country, where I am to be introduced to one of our Indian women, that chance has brought to this country. We are really, in the hands of the eternal, like the seed that a labourer sows, and the wind disperse on every side! Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVI.

TO GLAZIR.

TWO young men of a genteel appearance met me whilst I was going on foot, according to the custom of this country, to my little hermitage. They conjured me to lend my assistance in forwarding their death. "For said they, with a seeming unconcernedness that absolutely astonished me, we are going to try who can kill the other with the greatest dexterity."

I consented to be the witness of their combat, at the same time, expressing a wish to know the cause of their disagreement. They were, at first, unwilling to give me satisfaction on this head, but, at length, told me that their quarrel related

to

to a modest woman, whom it was necessary to requite with blood. I asked them gravely, if they would fight, in case this woman could be proved to have been liberal of her favours; and they replied "God forbid!"—In hopes therefore that delay might calm their fury, I proposed to them, before they proceeded to actual murder, to go and observe the countenance of the lady in question; and I even went so far as to assert that I had sufficient reasons for the making of such a proposition. They imagined that I was acquainted with her, and instantly consented; but our journey did not, in the least, abate their choler. At length we arrived, and absolutely found the charmer drinking claret in the company of two clerks, with whom she appeared enchanted. Our two young gentlemen were thunderstruck; they fled to the stair-case; and the lady—the virtuous lady—who was supposed to be dying with grief, was abandoned for ever.

The fury of the duellists now happily subsided; and they embraced me with
all

all possible gratitude.. “Alas, courteous stranger, said they, with tears in their eyes,—we were not afraid of dying; but we shuddered at the idea of cutting each other’s throats, having been intimate friends from our childhood.”

We took a coach, and I carried them to my hermitage, where we supped together, and spent the evening most cordially,—I, charmed with having saved their lives, and they enchanted because they had not broken the bands of the most cordial friendship. I gave them a little advice, which they received with effusion of heart.

This accident, I confess, has much affected me. France would have lost in these two young officers, a couple of heroes who will, one day, adorn and cherish her, with their courage and their talents. They invited me, yesterday, to dine with three of their friends, who gave me a thousand thanks. Alas! my friend, if I had come to Paris only for the purpose

pose of performing this good action, my journey had not been useless. The prescience of the eternal, according to our prophet, would have expressly conducted me to the destined spot; and when we reflect that a man is come, even from India, to save the lives of two Frenchmen, we cannot help admiring that Providence whose impenetrable designs produce the most singular events!

LETTER

LETTER LXXVII.

TO GLAZIR.

I O be followed by a couple of huge footmen; to receive from their hands a prayer book, taken from a velvet bag, fringed with gold; to have a privileged chapel; to rush through the crowd, preceded by livery servants; to arrive in the midst of a congregation which has been disturbed in order to give place; to hear a fashionable discourse pronounced by a fashionable priest;—is to have the devotion of a woman of quality. To stand humbly and unobserved at the church door, in a neat and simple dress, is to have the piety of a bourgeoise!

Now

Now tell me freely and candidly to which of these two devotions thou wouldst give the preference? It seems the latter is not without its merit, but of what importance is the virtue of a plebeian?

Preachers, in this city, endeavour as much as possible to allure duchesses to their sermons; for their discourses are almost all adapted to the frivolousness of the present fashions. They are composed of far fetched phrases, a loose and rambling style, and a sort of poetry reduced to prose. In these amphibolous sermons, every subject is handled. Politics, matters relating to the treasury, fashions, the publications of the day, all come into play in their turns, and are all set off by theatrical declamation, and studied gesture. But what I am most surprised at is, that although these dervises preach to christians, they are continually offering fresh arguments to prove the truth of christianity, which has subsisted during so many ages. This really looks as if they were not sure of their ground. I, for
my

my own part, have gathered nothing from their discourses but invectives against free-thinkers who never come to hear them; and objections which they believe they have conquered, but which only serve to plant doubts and fears in the minds of their hearers.

I was making these remarks when a sensible man informed me that the late king of Sardinia thought in the same manner. Happening to hear a preacher, who came from Paris, endeavouring to defend religion, he said to him, "I am astonished that you should take such pains to prove these truths to persons who already believe them; especially after they have been preached for such a number of years. I command you never again to discuss such questions; for your sermons alone are enough to create infidels, although, at present, I have not a single unbeliever in my kingdom."

Sermons are here sold at all prices, like any other sort of merchandize: and it lately happened that two divines who had

dealt with one author, preached the same sermon in the same church; one at ten o'clock in the morning, and the other at six in the evening. It was concluded, reasonably enough, by the congregation that neither had composed his own discourse. The preachers in high wrath, repaired to the house of the vender, in order to load him with reproaches; but he silenced them at once by saying, "If you had paid me four Louis d'ors for your sermon, you would have been sure of having a new and an elegant composition; but so long as you continue to give me but twelve livres, you will receive nothing but what is hacknied and trifling."—
Adieu!—

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

SOLIMA TO ZATOR.

O! my friend, my only friend, what art thou doing at this moment? I have just embraced thy tender infants:—they are in a profound sleep:—the whole family is retired to rest, and I only am waking! _____

The night is infinitely more suited to meditation than the day; because we can muse upon the absent, undisturbed by noise: uninterrupted by the sight of objects that snatch us from ourselves!

I protest

I protest to thee that darkness, to me, is clearer than light; for in the bosom of darkness I can perceive thy image, and it is then and only then that my love, my tender love embraces my dearest husband!

Yes, soul of my soul, I often rise at midnight, to think of thy virtues. May they always surround thee!—for thou canst not have a better guard.—

— When I write to thee I act as secretary to all thy wives. They flock around me to follow with a greedy eye, the traits of my pen, which are the movements of my heart! I am astonished myself at the violence with which my heart bounds at every thought I transcribe; but is it not the place whence my pen takes every sentence?

Never could I have believed that it was possible to love to such an excess. I am convinced that it would not be believed in the country where thou now residest. In Paris love is said merely to glance upon

upon hearts, and then to pass away like
a zephyr!

I am afraid to mention our dear Zabuc.—He died as I wish to die—full of resignation to heaven, and attachment to thee.

Do not forget to bring me the novelties that I formerly requested. If thou shouldst stay much longer, they will be out of fashion before I receive them, particularly if what I have heard respecting Paris be true. They tell me that it changes every three months in such a manner as not easily to be known again. A stranger who had lived in it four years, returned after an absence of five more, and recognised neither the court, the ministers, the manners, the buildings, the walks, nor the streets. Every thing had been transformed!

Stretch forth thy hand, that I may kiss it a thousand and a thousand times.—Oh! that thy apparition would, at least appear before my eyes!

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXIX.

T O G L A Z I R.

I ENDEAVOUR as much as possible, to become acquainted with Paris. The other day, chance threw me into a house where the *beau monde* arrived almost incessantly; and, by good fortune, I seated myself close by a man who was inordinately fond of talking, and who appeared to be conversant with a thousand private anecdotes respecting his countrymen.

May I be permitted to ask you, said I to him, respectfully, the quality of that lady who affects such haughtiness in her conversation and deportment?

"She is a woman, he replied, who fifteen years ago, would not have been received into company, on account of her

mean

mean origin; but having lately married a lord, she has assumed all the silly importance of pride and opulence. By this kind of behaviour she thinks she shall erase the remembrance of her former lowliness; instead of which, she only increases the number of her enemies, who do not fail to remind her of her pedigree."

And that huge fat man, that blows and stretches himself in yon elbow chair?

"He is a man who will die of indigestion; for it is not necessary to talk of the life of such a being, who lives only to eat."

I was struck with the grotesque figure of this person, who seemed to be the picture of dullness and stupidity; and I had a desire to know his rank, particularly as he spoke in a different tone and manner from other people.—"He is an academician," replied my companion, which you would easily have known, had you not been a stranger."

A little lean man now arrived, who talked of nothing but himself; except
when

when he alluded to others by way of ridicule. I was informed that he had lately been in Italy whence he imported his teasing impertinence; that he was an author who had written three bad poems in his life-time; and that these works had made him so arrogant that he would not submit to be contradicted. He asked questions of every body, but never waited for a reply. I had observed this strange sort of conduct, and therefore when he interrogated me, I made him no answer. He bent his brows, bit his lips, and appeared to be stupefied; mean-while his confusion afforded me infinite amusement.

I now perceived a well-dressed man, whom I took for a principal courtier. "He appears at court sometimes, said my intelligencer, but both his fortune and existence depend upon gaining. To-day he is superbly habited, to-morrow, perhaps, he will be without a coat. Wading through every vicissitude of fate, and alternately experiencing happiness and misery;

misery; sometimes he aspires to greatness, and sinks to the very verge of suicide."

And that agreeable lady, whose eyes are so charmingly provoking?

"She is a circular letter addressed to all travellers; and you may procure a perusal of her whenever you please. It is true, she is a woman of quality, but this title does not make her more wise than her neighbours." ———

I must break off.—My windows, unlike those of India, are situated next the street, and I am interrupted by a confused and everlasting din. People are here in the habit of crying every thing through the public ways, infomuch that even the pin-merchant proclaims his merchandize. These cries compose one continued yell, or inarticulate noise, that commences at break of day, and continues till dinner-time.

I spent my time yesterday at the *Palais Royal*, where I was casually placed among a group of ladies and gentlemen who supported

ported a rational conversation, respecting good manners and noble sentiments. "Do not deceive yourself, said one of my friends, to whom I expressed my admiration, as he accidentally passed by,—nobody talks more frequently of honour than impostors, of virtue than women of the town, of probity than knaves! An adventurer has often exhausted the credit of twenty merchants, and emptied the purses of a dozen friends, by saying that he never borrowed. It is astonishing how craft and subtilty find means of procuring money.—A few years ago, a man sent a certificate of his marriage to some money-lenders whom he intended to dupe, and another of his burial to several creditors whom he wished to elude. The two certificates, dated on the same day, fell into the hands of the same person, and you may guess what surprise and confusion they produced."

Notwithstanding the vigorous imagination of our countrymen, an Indian could never have formed such a design.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R LXXX.

TO GLAZIR.

I ENTER the house of a friend while every body is talking of an event that engages public attention; I pass on to another, and find the same effervescence upon the same subject. I repair to the *Palais Royal*, where a universal murmur informs me that all the world is acquainted with the news: I make various visits, —every place resounds with the same intelligence, and it is impossible to drop a word upon any other topic. Alas! the very next day this adventure is grown a dozen years old! —It is spoken of no more, —it is entirely forgotten, —and the most insipid trifles succeed to an event that seemed to be immortal. Such is Paris!

An

An unknown lady appears in the public promenades. She has the figure of a nymph, the face of a goddess, and the smile of an angel. She is surrounded, admired, and followed. Those who have seen her, felicitate themselves on the occasion, and are anxious to see her again,—yet wonderful to tell! a few days afterwards, they hardly deign to fix their eyes on the enchantress. Such are the Parisians!

“When will that charming book be published? Where will it be sold? An age has passed since it was first announced!”——The book at last appears,—It is purchased with eagerness, a few pages of it are partially read, and then, in order to give place to some insignificant pamphlet, it drops into oblivion! Such is the enthusiasm of this country!

With respect to myself, I am much amused by this caprice; for I love a people that shew themselves under different aspects, much better than a gloomy and stagnant nation.

L E T T E R.

LETTER LXXXI.

TO GLAZIR.

I HAD, yesterday, a brisk contestation, although I am not fond of disputes, with a military officer, who lavished the title of *great man* upon all authors that have excelled in prose or poetry.

I told him fairly that I was only an Indian, perhaps no more than a barbarian in his eyes,—but that, agreeably to the instinct that I had received from my Creator, I dared to sustain that he who made good verses was not a great man, but merely a great poet; that an advocate who composed sublime discourses was nothing but a great orator; that a

musician

musician (Gluck himself) was only a great musician; and that even the conqueror, who overstepped the boundaries of justice and moderation, possessed nothing that characterised greatness.

“The great man, in my eyes, said I, is he who saves his country, or enlightens it—not by works of wit, but by unalterable laws.”

Many that heard us, were of my opinion, lamenting that inferior writers were in the habit of distributing titles at random, without knowing whether or no they would be allowed by posterity. A great magistrate, a great minister, a great general, a great king,—these are the great men to whom the earth ought to offer incense.

As benevolence is allied to greatness of soul, it cannot be doubted that a man with a disposition to relieve the unfortunate, whether he build hospitals or deliver prisoners from captivity, is a great man, because he is the hero of humanity. Every individual in the world ought to

pay

pay tribute to his country ; some by their talents, others by their virtues. When wit gives its contribution, without doubt, it merits praise, but not sufficiently so to gain the distinguished title in question.

It should be said of Corneille *he was a man* ; of Henry IV. *he was a great man*. There are shades between men of eminence, as between flowers ; the epithet *superb* that is given to the rose, is not bestowed upon the violet.

Thou findest, my friend, that I have sometimes the temerity to sustain arguments even in a city like Paris. But I firmly believe it has often been said by my opponents—"How, the devil, should, an Indian understand these matters."——
Adieu."——

LETTER

LETTER LXXXII.

TO GLAZIR.

MY leisure is occupied with walking. I frequently visit the four public promenades that embellish this capital. To-day I view the Thuilleries, which really enchant me; to-morrow the Palais Royal, which amuses me; the day after, the Luxembourg, which inspires me with sad and melancholy ideas; and the day after that, the king's garden, with which I am much interested. While I ramble among the plants, I find myself in a land of knowledge, for even the labourers that water them are botanists!

This

This spot is particularly adapted to reflection. I was walking near some cedars, whose towering branches reminded me of mount Libanus, when a handsome young man accosted me, and begged my attention to what he was going to relate. Copious streams of tears served as a preface to his narrative, and I suffered them to flow on, being yet a stranger to the motive that enforced them. He told me that he came from La Trape, a monastery of dervises, who hold an eternal silence. His sighs cut short his words, insomuch that I could hardly understand what he said. At length however I learnt that he had fled from the resentment of one of the fathers who was inflamed against him; that he had no asylum whither he could fly for refuge, nor the least means of subsistence; that he had placed a confidence in me, because he knew I was a stranger, and therefore hoped I should be able to afford him consolation."

I gained his esteem in a short time. A few words, extracted from the bottom of my soul, opened his heart, and he acknowledged

knownedged that the habit he wore was not his own,—that *she* (for I must now use the feminine gender) had disguised her sex to avoid a prison; and that her misfortunes proceeded from a firm resolution of marrying a young man that had been proposed to her as a husband, by her father, who had retracted his proposal in consequence of a tragical event which had lately taken place.

And who is this husband, said I, that occasions your torment?

Alas, she replied, I dare not inform you, on account of his situation. He was born a gentleman, and has a thousand excellent qualities; but his father has been executed on a public scaffold, for the dreadful crime of murder.

I shuddered.—It was impossible to stifle her love; and if I had conducted her to her father, he would have killed her without remorse. While I was musing within myself on the means of affording her assistance, the young man joined us. The tears stood in his eyes, and under a down-cast and desponding air, I could discover

a countenance noble and generous. "For these fifteen days past, said he, the companion of my misfortunes and myself have watched an opportunity of finding you alone. We have been told by those who have the happiness to approach you, that you have an elevated soul, and a tender heart. Through your means therefore we wish to be conveyed to India, in order to place the wide ocean between her father and ourselves; for if his anger should not then be appeased, at least we shall be secure from its rigours. The young lady's rank is conspicuous, and mine would have been the same, had not my unhappy father, and consequently his family, been degraded."

In pronouncing these words, he tore his hair, and I stood in need of the most powerful eloquence to console him. We wept all three, when, lifting my eyes towards heaven, I said to them, behold the proof of my sincerity, and of the part that I take in your calamities. A lucky idea has struck me,—I will myself go in search of mademoiselle's father, and per-

suade him to favour the union privately, assuring him at the same time, that I will undertake to conduct you to India, where, in a country so far removed from Paris you will be able to procure a military employment; and where ye may both live unknown if all you have told me be truth.

No sooner had I finished speaking than they threw themselves at my feet, kissed my hands, and watered them with their tears. I gave them some gold for their present subsistence, on condition that the young female should be introduced, under a borrowed name, to a lady of my acquaintance, with whom she should remain concealed till the moment the project could be put into execution. That very evening she retired to the house of the lady in question, who is a woman of the strictest honour and virtue.

Well, my dear Glazir, what sayest thou to the revolutions of human life?—Another good work!—We are placed here for the purpose of doing good, and we ought not to be tired of the employment. Adieu!—Thou shalt know the result of this adventure.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIII.

MADEMOISELLE DE * * * *

TO ZATOR.

IS it possible, too generous sir, that you can interest yourself with so much ardour, for an unfortunate female who has had the good fortune to see you but once? How unlike is such conduct to our French manners which have been corrupted by egotism, and whose least blemish is inconsiderateness!

My grief has changed its object,—I now shed only tears of gratitude. I have pleaded my cause at the tribunal of your heart, and I stand acquitted. An excellent young man, in every respect my equal, was proposed—nay, introduced to me by my father, I was inflamed, heaven knows,

knows, much less by his figure, than by his mind and virtues; and my family were enchanted to see me happy. A dreadful misfortune, with which you are already acquainted, in the mean while came, and overthrew all my fond designs. —Here, I will confess to you, I sink under my miseries :—was there even a situation so wretched as mine?—Is it then the fault of my future husband if a cruel and unexpected event has, in a single moment, changed his destiny : and should I not be the most weak and contemptible of human beings if, on this account, I were to withdraw my affections? Besides, the die is cast,—I cannot avoid loving him, and he is a thousand times dearer to me on account of his misfortunes. It was in vain that I expressed a desire to be buried with him in some little asylum, situated at the extremity of the kingdom, and hidden in the midst of some unfrequented wood, where we could only see the light of the stars, and of the sun. My father was inflexible. —From that very moment,

moment, he held me so much in aversion, that his sole aim was to shut me up in a dungeon; nor did he follow my unfortunate lover with less fury. No retreat was sheltered from his researches.—

In this terrible crisis, all trembling as I was, I procured a disguise, and fled to the convent of La Trape, where I spent eleven months, but where I could no longer continue, being unwilling either to make a mockery of religion, or to contract a fresh engagement, when I had pledged my faith to one whom I am still determined to make my husband in spite of every possible consequence. I shall be disinherited; I shall be deprived of my rank and consequence, but I shall still retain my affections, and the consolation of having fulfilled my duty. I shall live by the labour of my hands, and procure a livelihood for the youth that I tenderly love. He has none of the vices of the age: he loves study; his manners are of gold, his character is excellent, and, at a time when religion

is

is despised, he respects and practises its ordinances.

This is my general confession.—I tremble till I arrive in a place of safety. If you were a Frenchman, industrious stranger, I should suspect your sincerity. But you are an Indian, formerly a subject of the great Hyder-Alli, and at present of his generous son Tippu Saib,—those two sovereigns that have exalted the souls of their people.

My fortune is in your hands,—heaven itself has placed it there; for only thro' inspiration could I have invoked your assistance! I shall die daily till I am re-united with him whom I adore. Since our persecution he has enlisted for a soldier, but the colonel, who is acquainted with his misfortunes, and who loves him as his own son, will grant him a discharge at a moment's warning.

Oh! that we were both in the arms of death! then would our ashes be covered by the same tomb, on which might be engraven

engraven the ardour of our loves, and an abridgment of our sad history. Excuse the length of this letter:—it resembles my unfortunate passion, to which there is no end!

The lady with whom you have placed me, partakes of your humanity. Her bounty of soul, and elevation of sentiment render her celestial.

If it be possible, may heaven preserve your life for ages yet to come!

My fortune is in your hands—heaven itself has placed it there; for only thro' intercession could I have invoked your assistance! I shall die daily till I am reunited with him whom I adore. Since our persecution he has enlisted for a soldier, but the colonel, who is acquainted with his own son, will grant him a discharge at his own warning.

LETTER

Oh! that we were both in the arms of death! then would our ashes be covered by the same tomb, on which might be engraven

LETTER LXXXIV.

TO GLAZIR.

IN order to lose all remembrance of a noisy and disdainful society to which my evil stars had introduced me, I went yesterday to spend the day with one of those city parties which are always rendered extremely agreeable by a natural freedom and unreservedness.

We embarked upon the Seine to the sound of musical instruments, and proceeded up the river till we came to a delightful villa, whose principal attractions were neatness, simplicity and commodiousness. Through gardens which seemed to possess all the natural beauties of fields, we walked to the dwelling-house. The
 hosts,

hosts, who were full of candour, and worthy the honour of having drawn their first breath in the good city of Paris, as it is called by the kings of France, received me most graciously. "That we may render every thing agreeable to you, said they, we will spend the day as it is spent in India. Shall we sit down to dinner upon chairs or carpets? We are ready to comply with your directions." Just at this moment arrived a company of lovely women, and gaiety instantly pervaded the whole house. Every individual assumed a cheerful countenance, and while dinner was preparing, some danced on the grass, others rambled through the groves and gardens; a third party tried their skill in angling, and it really seemed as if the most beautiful fishes in the river suffered themselves to be caught, for the purpose of heightening our diversion. The gentlemen gathered nosegays for the ladies, from parterres covered with a profusion of flowers; and, in order to join the simple with the agreeable, they resorted

to

to a neighbouring meadow that was filled with blooming and adoriferous herbs. Each crowned his mistress with a garland composed of these sweet scented materials, and we dined, enveloped with perfumes, under spreading branches, adorned with flowers.

The alcoran seemed to be written on every bottle to warn me from drinking ; but I was left to my own discretion in this respect, nor did any one attempt to make me the subject of pleasantry. We spoke by turns, and laughed altogether ; and the most agreeable catches, glees, and simple airs, gave a zest to the banquet. The wines circulated in abundance till we were supplied with coffee by the daughter of our host, who appeared less a mortal than a beautiful fairy or goddess. And now each began to tell his tale, which, as all tales ought to be, was extremely short. I was desired in my turn to give a description of our Indian revels. While I was speaking, I observed that the lady of the house, by the most significant looks, imposed

posed a general silence ; for in France it is hardly possible for a man to speak without being interrupted.

At length we romped and sported with all the frankness and innocence of children. There are little French games which I wish to introduce among our women, because they always drive away melancholy. We ran backwards and forwards, describing a thousand romantic figures ; and this continual movement kept us all at bay, and excited the most lively merriment.

The pleasures of the chase now changed the scene. A kind of small deer, known by the name of rabbits, sprang in abundance from a little bushy wood, and the company were emulous of shewing their skill and address in killing them. From the branches over our heads,—for we had gained permission to hunt in one of the king's pleasure grounds—we culled delicious grapes and fruits of every kind. We stretched ourselves upon the grassy turf till night began to distribute its shades,
when

when we retired to the mansion. Here we found card-tables prepared for those that were fond of play, and seats for such as preferred conversation.

The hour of supper was announced by a band of music, when we withdrew to a delightful saloon, where we partook of a light and exquisite collation. I would have defied all the societies in the world to have been better entertained. It is true, we had neither lords nor witlings among us.—We drank healths, a custom indeed that has lately been exploded, and as soon as we had quitted table, we formed ourselves into a circle for the purpose of relating histories of fairies and apparitions. “This is a Gothic amusement,” said the master of the house, but we are pleased with it, and I have remarked that people were much more animated than at present, when they believed in ghosts and fairies. For my own part, I have frequently imagined that I saw a spectre entering the room to bring me news from the other world, or some benevolent fairy,
that

that was going to conduct me to an enchanted palace. Since those times of good fellowship, our pleasures have been trifling and monotonous. Nothing will please in our days but wit, and our wit is too sparkling to be amusive. Formerly our midnight assemblies were excessively interesting, because they produced tales of wonder and delight, and kept the attention of the company awake. Now, the preference is given to a tiresome listlessness. Without a book in our hands, we are afraid even to speak. If there be not a set of academical phrases at our tongue's end, we are deemed unworthy of holding a conversation."

We returned to Paris in a boat illuminated by flambeaux, while our oars beat time to violins. Our hosts made me promise to return at some future day. "We have neither titles, said they, nor immense wealth, but we have the presumption to believe that we can entertain you better than many of the nobility, whose pride and ambition are obstacles to every amuse ment.

amusement. Here we love one another cordially, we admire sincerity and plain-dealing, we esteem innocence,—and if justice be still upon the earth, we hope she is not estranged from our habitations.”

In Paris, my dear friend, as in all other places, a man that would learn the manners of the country should see every different class of people. He who frequents only the houses of noblemen will find nothing that is natural, while he who visits the inferior orders will view nature in her dishabille.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXV.

ZATOR TO MADEMOISELLE DE ****

MY soul burned with a desire to oblige you, after the hints you gave me, the day before yesterday, respecting the character of your father, and the disposition of your family. I waited upon him in the true Indian fashion; he received me with dignity, and I spoke the language of truth herself. I represented to him the danger of his wrath and obstinacy, and the advantages of a reconciliation. He listened to me with much attention, and at length consented that you should be indissolubly united with the object of your desires, and that, after receiving your portion, you should set sail with me immediately for India.

I shall

I shall say nothing of the obstacles I had to surmount before this desirable point could be effected. My difficulties are of no sort of consequence since the victory is ours. — — —

Your father will call at my little hermitage at eight o'clock this evening, whether you are desired to repair with your future husband. In the mean while I will see and congratulate you both.

Return thanks to heaven:—for to Heaven alone you both owe your preservation.

LETTER LXXXVI.

TO SOLIMA, NERISA, AND PALMYRA.

THE present letter is addressed to you all; and ye will all receive it as a testimony of my love. The time approaches when I shall have the inexpressible pleasure of rejoining you, and this reunion will be the perfume of my life,

the enchantment of my soul, and the triumph of my heart.

Ye may judge, by my expressions of gladness, whether or no I have forgotten the partners of my bed. Paris is in my memory, but ye are all mingled with my existence! I shall not return to you under the form of a philosopher, nor under the figure of a coxcomb, for I have seen such personages only to abhor them. But I shall present myself before you with all the simplicity of a man frank and loyal, who tells you, in the sincerity of his heart, that he loves you, and whose only ambition is to render you happy.

Prepare your ears to hear a recital of trifles, simplicities, and agreeable things; for the good city of Paris unites all extravagancies.

Embrace my dear children, and implore, without ceasing, the favours of heaven;--it is there that the great sovereign resides, who governs Europe, the Indies, and every country in the world. Adieu.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

To GLAZIR.

“ PERHAPS, said a lawyer, with whom I lately conversed, our civil laws are the best in the world. The ordinance of 1664, made by Louis XIV. is a masterpiece of legislation which no man has ever charged with a single fault. But as to our criminal laws, they are insupportable;—they were made at a time when men, who had not yet emerged from barbarism, committed the grossest enormities,—when those who had their share of virtue, too austere in their manners, imagined that they could not proceed against criminals with too much fury and resentment. As the present generation
however

however is more softened and polished, a reform of the criminal code is indispensably necessary. In short, we ought to borrow the criminal laws of the English, and, in return, give them our civil pre-scripts, of which they stand in the utmost need, this branch of their justice being wretchedly administered."

He added that the French had too many laws and ordinances; that the English claimed the superiority in this respect, for which reason transgressions were much less frequent in England than in France.

We agreed before we parted, that it would be in vain to reform or correct statute-books; that the world would never be perfect; and that we ought to be contented with it as it is, because we cannot make another that will please us better.

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

TO GLAZIR.

I AM just returned from London where I have passed fifteen days. This city seems to be the antipodes of Paris, notwithstanding the eagerness of the Parisians and Londoners to steal each other's fashions. I have observed the fogs of the Thames on the faces of the English, and the colours of the rainbow amidst the fogs of the Seine. Such is the difference between the two nations. Here people speak only by monosyllables:—while they are at table they make a confused noise that no mortal can understand, and the louder they hollow, the greater is their diversion. The streets are superb, the

the houses ordinary. We meet with neither palaces nor hotels, but we are as much *at home*, as at Paris we are neglected.

The proceedings of parliament are always ready to excite commotions. The greatest noblemen in spite of that English liberty which is extolled with so much emphasis, frequently sell themselves to the court for money. Some of their laws are worthy of the golden age, others call loudly for reformation. The liberty of citizens is held sacred, and, were it otherwise, the people would take justice into their own hands; they are the sovereigns of London, and it is only by copying them that the Parisians sometimes abandon themselves to the most dangerous excesses.

This city contains more inhabitants than Paris; but, as it is a stranger to French hilarity, it appears less animated. Its promenades are without embellishment, for which reason a Londoner never walks till he is attacked by a consumption.

Women

Women are as submissive here as they are arrogant at Paris. Their husbands keep them in a kind of continual slavery; the superintendence of their houses constitutes the whole of their amusement. It is astonishing how a hundred leagues of distance changes the manners: Paris and London almost touch each other, and yet they are absolutely two different worlds!

I have not been followed as at Paris. The Londoners are far from being curious,—the disdain they affect for every thing that is not English renders them inattentive to strangers. They apply themselves almost incessantly to the arts and sciences; they learn the French language for the purpose of not speaking it, and travel into France with a previous determination never to love a Frenchman. Levity is not their characteristic, and yet no nation in the world is fonder of change.

England was formerly generous, but she has lately become fashionable, and is now only liberal through ostentation!

LETTER

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

T O G L A Z I R.

WHILE I was in London, an English lady told me that one of her uncles had lately gained an immense fortune in India. A venerable old man having told him that a great treasure was hidden, according to an ancient tradition, in a certain place, he repaired thither in great haste, and after having rummaged for three days and three nights, found an iron coffer charged with the following inscription in Arabic:

“Whoever thou art that hast found this accumulated riches, take it!—It belongs to thee on these special conditions,—Thou shalt give a portion of it to the sun, and another to the moon.”

Q

The

The coffer was filled with gold, and jewels of inestimable value. The inscription embarrassed the poor uncle, who had a timorous soul. He consulted several Indians who informed him that, by the sun he ought to understand men who were luminous by means of their learning, but who unfortunately remained in indigence; and by the moon, those secondary men of science that shone only with a borrowed light.

Rather than go to the moon in search of an explication, he adopted this; and divided a third part of the treasure among the persons that had been destined to receive it, by the oracles of the country.

LETTER

LETTER XC.

TO GLAZIER.

I SHOULD have quitted Paris, at last, without tasting of real voluptuousness, had I not been prevented in my design by a combination of favourable circumstances. It was a woman that detained me; and I will confess to you that she was irresistible. After having described the place whither she was going, she took me by the hand, and compelled me to follow her. We entered a little alley, and ascended a stair-case that conducted us to a chamber that was exposed on all sides to the wind and rain. It was there that I perceived the shade of a man—for disease and indigence had reduced

him to a spectre—lying upon straw by the side of his daughter, who was giving him a spoonful of wine that she had bought at the risk of being herself destroyed with hunger. He fixed upon me his dying eyes, which extremely affected me.—I should have wept had I not held in my hand something which I knew would console these two miserable objects.

The daughter, after having explained the cause of her misery,—after having told me that her mother, who was seventy years old, had, with much pain and difficulty, crawled down stairs in order to entreat the baker to lend her a loaf,—was suddenly deprived both of speech and motion on seeing me throw down twelve pieces of gold on the straw bed. Presently, however recalling her senses, she cried, “My dear parent, do you see the angel that God hath sent from heaven to preserve you from death?”

The mother now entered, who announced that she had been unsuccessful; observing that since Providence had refused them nourishment, they ought to

die without murmuring.—“ Alas, said I, to myself, are rags a proper covering for such sentiments?”

Just at this moment she fixed her eyes upon me, and the tears that were occasioned by surprise and hope called forth mine, especially when the mother and daughter talked of the succours I had brought them.

“ Ah, sir, said the miserable woman, since you are so charitable, leave us, I beseech you, two crown pieces, for we are terrified at the sight of so much gold. Should the commissary visit us he will think we have stolen it.—Alas, kindest of strangers, she continued, you were, without doubt, born at a great distance from this city :—our unfeeling neighbours never bestow their money upon the unfortunate.”

I removed their fears by declaring that the sum I had given them was lawfully their own, and that they ought to use it as a blessing from heaven. After promising to return within a few days, I made my escape.

L E T T E R

LETTER XCI.

TO GLAZIR

TO go, or not to go?—shall I quit Paris in the moment of such an interesting epocha? Inquiries and extracts are every where made, and every individual studies and scrutinizes antiquity, in order to find laws and examples, that may serve as patterns of imitation to the National Assembly,—that august and magnificent senate whose terrestrial stars, if I may be allowed the expression, eclipse the stars of the firmament with their superior lustre!

Be not surprised, my dear friend, if I should suspend my return till the conclusion of this memorable event.

The

The oftener you read my letter the more you will be convinced that Paris is a city where the lightest manners are opposed to the noblest ideas ; where trifles acquire the strongest consistency ; where the fool becomes a wit, the frivolous writer a man of consequence ; where fortunes are gained and lost as suddenly as reputations ; where the coxcomb, delighted with his own person, is eternally before your eyes ; where books that are brought forth in the morning are buried and forgotten before the setting sun.

Remember that in sketching the manners of Paris, I have painted those of France in general.—Adieu.—

F I N I S.



